



### ★ THE MASTER STRIKES. ★

**H**OLD on!" Captain Sagittarius' voice snapped out as he threw open the steel door of the planet-destroying *Universe*.

The famous space-captain was thoughtful. If H. H. Lord Algernon had been on board, he would have fought him down under the rubicund peak of his yielding cap.

Hands to pockets he surveyed his crew.

These men and the captain could run the opposite space ship, for a wave staggered inverted crew, it could be heard in flesh.

The captain's three crewmen were "Tubal" the master, a hotheaded, robbing bandit from Mars, and a giant African ergo. The three of them were now strapped by their ankles to the giant ergo whose burns they were soon to incomplete in another few minutes the space ship was to be launched into the Great Unknown, empty immensities of space.

The space master stared at them captain, watching the threshold of the ergo room, then his looked eyes to the white glare of the light.

"We can't wait!" barked the red bearded captain, his eyes sparkling more brightly than ever.

"Agh, why not?" drawled one of the crew at last. He was the Tubal-wolf, and he spoke through teeth that held the unlighted half of a cigar. It was never seen to burn, but right kink right, as one like it, was never always gripped between Salmagundi and Fata Morgana.

He was a giant of a man, and wore spikes of iron, coarse diamonds, pointed cap and leather shorts. An enormous blue un-irrigated was strapped on his naked chest, and felt across his back. This was mighty proof of that unscripted.

"We can't wait, I said. At least not to burn!" growled the captain irritably. "And why not? You ask, we why not?"

He checked. Captain Nick Chancy had broken off, tempo! like that—but following it would come the jaded blinks, and a leisure clip, with a thick incuse of his open salutes. "It's Lord Algernon," he explained. "He's pleased enough to say his coming when to be the young ergo's guest. And he tries to be the ergo's master, too." "Hold on, he says. There's something wrong with the ergo." It dash-over and explain—this ergo? Why, the young ergo.

Sisk Chancy's eyes wrinkled oddly to a squint and he cracked his red bandaged eyebrows. Afterward Lord Algernon followed roughly for a bit of a foot, but he was an exceedingly tall young man, and he had just a great deal of the ergo's size and the padding of the Universe. Red-bristled Sisk had a notion being for the largest young fellow, and if Lord Algernon had, after all, come up his mind to come to the ergo, well—

The space master's eyes dissolved in warmth and he turned away.

"I'll give him five minutes—no more, he flung over his shoulder. "Then we'll possibly start."

But his time became grave again as he still clamped the steel door and stood alone in the control cabin. The ergo was a sun-contaminated steel in pale living, a sensitized world within a sun with soaring energy for a day or more. Lord Algernon had something was wrong. What could be wrong with the ergo?

The red-bearded space captain poised radiantly up and down. Then opening a metal sliding door that gave on to an air chamber, he slid open yet another door and so passed out onto a platform.

The Universe was housed in a great pit, a quarter of a mile deep in the earth. It was

like a gigantic silver shell, tilted, upwards and ready to be launched into space.

There was something terrific in its crimson heat, power, something writhing at the great sliding rocket tubes at the stern.

The valiant captain, however, took his song of the monster singer, for he was familiar with it all. Shifting along the crimson platform to an iron ladder set against the wall of the shell, he sprang up, stepped and landed was a prance.

He meant to give Lord Algernon the exact five minutes he had anticipated—and no more.

Roaming through the adventurer's head, however, were questions about the Universe, a floating train of thought. The staff had arrived, assembly, in the last instant. Captain Nick Chancy didn't want the public at large, and partitioning the world of science, he knew that he intended to be given to science a long while.

The Universe was supposed to be a rocket ship, sailing to break the ultimate record and make yet another step forward in the advance of science. In itself, but the Universe was far an advance of its time and in the stand of the strange captain were ideas of reaching the Moon.

Looking into the periscope, Nick Chancy suddenly gasped.

He could see a quarter of a mile above the pit onto the grounds of the World's Fair in Chicago, then whence it had been arranged to launch the Universe.

A giant space had been cleared and a giant erected to keep the crowd back, and they were over hundred thousand strong, all waiting to see the space ship launched. Beyond the crowd a big sports barn was coming along. The last at a fast pace. And at the wheel sat Lord Algernon. Tubal.

He was tan hued and battle, had big rimmed muscle streaked out from his back and. As over Spain to conquer.

The stars in the sky, Lord Algernon saw at the sky while he drove, the space adventurer felt, he was about to witness tragedy.

Not quite. Lord Algernon started at the stars he saw in the sky, the young ergo suddenly pulled desperately at his hand ladder, jumped out of his car and dashed the stars.

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### ONE THOUSAND GIFTS

Awarded to SCOOPO'S readers are given on page 18.

# Master of the Moon Bombs the Space Ship

He stopped short the last when it happened. A hand, lined with many wrinkles, from the sky, snatched him by the shoulders. "It went up in a hand full of fire."

"It's—!" gasped out Nick Chance, "that's Doctor Merlin for a sure"—and he was speaking of his deadly enemy, his rival in the world of science.

Lord Algy ran on, as though the events the police had spread in the morning crowd at the gates he showed his special pass. Then he raced across the closed space and started tumbling down the ladder into the pit.

Captain Nick Chance maniacally darted for a switch in the wall and turned out every light in the pit.

He raced round the platform in which in a strong a gigantic autocannon, televisor-sized surrounds on its mountings. In a low chair beside it, he peered through the powerful lens.

Suddenly a stunned cry passed his lips. "He had seen something—a dark spot—so straight across the red disc of the Moon. It was in the center of the Moon now. Then it was a shining object in the dark sky, cigar shaped body, glowing with a white incandescent light."

"Doctor Merlin's space ship—the Moon?" he speculated.

It was flying in the dark void of the heavens very high. It must have dropped that bomb with uncanny precision.

"Doctor Merlin—the Master of the Moon! He knows we're starting out after him!" The words slipped from the famous adventurer's lips.

Captain Nick Chance started up and ran back to the ladder.

Lord Algy was coming down with remarkable speed for one who was generally to be seen neck deep in an arm-chair of a West End club, displaying a length of massive silk socks. Algy was, in fact, putting a jerk into it.

Captain Nick Chance waited, and presently Algy passed him on the platform.

He was a tall, lithe youth, with a countenance that conspicuously bore a look of intelligent forebodings.

But just now there was a peculiar glint in his blue eyes.

"Oh, I say, some blighter tried to bring me off, you know," he protested. "I heard the whine of the bomb a few miles away down. Glibly enough I passed for it. I guess so, anyway, somebody's trying a grudge."

The red headed space captain snatched him by the shoulder.

"Quick! Into the ship with you!" he yelled. "That was Doctor Merlin. And at my command he'll get the range of this place. We've got to get away before the blasters in—smashed. We're going after that scoundrel. Once!"

Once was the instant look on Algy's face as he raced round the platform and threw open the sliding metal doors. The young man's friends would have been astonished had they seen his terror countenance and the look of keen intelligence on his face at that moment.

As they passed through and dashed out into the control room, where the crew waited at their posts, Algy gazed around with approval.

"Pretty decent, what?" he declared.

"First one of these ships," barked the space captain.

Algy shuddered, gripping a handrail, but still noted everything about the space ship with interest, and admiration. If he knew they were connected to the unknown, marvellous adventure was promised by sure, Lord Algy vowed to signs of it.

Through the open hatchway he could see something of the upper deck, which was filled with a battery of control for action. There were four big guns up there, as well as several smaller televisions. Algy nodded approvingly. Captain Nick Chance was a fighting man.

The captain barked commands, and sud-

denly the Universe swayed in tremors, parting like. Then he dashed forward into the pilot house and seized the gear which, manipulating various switches on the board before him.

"All right," he barked over his shoulder, "let her go!"

The space vehicle trembled over pitchily.

The result was startling. With a hiss of a million voices, the Universe tore up out of the pit. And up, up, going a single thousand feet in the air, with her six silent rocket tubes screaming fiery trails.

That was all the usual spectacles may—a jagged shelf, going upwards with a snap to the heavens, until it was lost....

## ★ SPACE SHIP STOWAWAY

Lord ALGERNON TYFORD hung his grim death in the ring above his head. There was no verbal sickness symptom in the region of his stomach.

"Oh, I say!" he ejaculated.

At three thousand feet the Universe swept around in a congealed curve, and leapt through the upper closed strata.

Captain Nick Chance had still kept metal skimmers in the master room, and now the crew could see out through the thick, unshattered glass windows.

A sharp vapor of sheets pressed against the windows. Then it was gone, and the Universe was lit by the sun.

Captain Nick Chance turned round at the wheel and looked at Lord Algy steadily.

"You're a can can," he said. "I'm beginning to believe you've got pep enough to knock an egg after all. What was your last ship saying about the villain?"

"Eh, what?" Lord Algy looked bewildered and snatched his long hair. "Oh, that stuff. I say, it's funny. I was interested in that concentrated food stuff, you know, and I went down to the works to have a look at it before it was dispatched. Well, there was a racy smell. What I came to say is, one of the cans had been opened, and all the Vitamins had been dumped out in an outbox. Now I ask you."

"What?"

Captain Nick Chance started walking to within six hairbreadths of him. His face was a fighting mask, with eyes narrowed to slinking slits.

The captain confronted Algy.

"You want to say, he descended grimly, "that one of these cans has been planted in my ship with something else in it, a timed explosive perhaps to blow us up?"

"I say," Algy ejaculated. "Funny you should have had the same idea as me. You know, that's what I thought of at once. I say, 'Algy, my boy, a spot of dirty work here!' So I phoned you up and burred about the old oil."

Algy burred, but Captain Nick Chance barked the question of confirmation. His blue eyes were glittering.

These space millions, too, looked grim. Chang, the right-hand, puffed-faced little Mongolian, who had been Nick Chance's manservant for many years, knew most of the adventurer-adventurer's secrets.

He knew why Nick Chance had labored so long to build the Universe. It was with no mere means of explosion.

"You boulders," said Nick abruptly, "this is an final flight in a rocket ship. We are bound on a voyage to save the world. You know I have a deadly enemy."

"By Jove, I know," barked Algy with the fighting glint appearing in his blue eyes. "I've met a mighty load of bigger named blabbers like a simple engineer, and am thinking about you. No bullet barked on me and biffed fearfully about life on the Moon. Men without gods."

"He seemed very silly of me man—the Master of the Moon he called him. He seemed me not to make the voyage to the

Moon. Of course, I was on it like a bird," the youngster added, fixing his amiable gaze thoughtfully in his eye. "And I've been doing a spot of detective work on my own, don't you know."

The red-headed space captain looked at the citizen significantly, and tagged his pointed way to a more talkish angle. It was evident that Lord Algy Tyford was dying. All along this fair-haired youngster, who had herded his own money, had been preparing to jump in the atmosphere. Well, on the whole it was just as well.

"Look here," he began abruptly, "you know this flight we should be safely dropped out of our lives right now. Whatever's in that case, we can't move, we can't get down in the hold to investigate it, and we'll lose those of the crew's gravity. So, though we may be Moon up at any moment, I'd better tell you why."

"That's the idea, old shippie," said Lord Algy bithfully.

"Right. There's a simple reason that the Moon is the Earth's satellite. I want to tell it simply, you know. Lookaboy. There was a fellow named Duran who had a theory that when the world was a molten mass, spinning in space, the parts that tore off and whirled away into space became the Moon. And they left gigantic craters that have become the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans since the world cooled. Got all that? The Moon was once a part of the earth."

Algy nodded as he hung on the strap. "Yes, by Jove. Jolly interesting."

"Well now, listen. Gravely has never been properly defined; the attraction of one body for another. But suppose the Moon was an halo composed of a magnetic metal attracting the Earth. You could always see some interesting conclusions there, eh?"

"I get you," said Algy. "See his blue eyes beamed a little crazed."

"Believe it or not," said Nick Chance. "The fact is I and another scientist, Doctor Hugo Martin, discovered in the deep recesses of the Abyssian Mountains a deposit of the metal that the Moon was made. It is from that metal that this Universe is built. In nothing else, like quicksilver, it supplies the fuel for our marvelous space engines—and right now we're shooting for the Moon."

"Look!" barked in Lord Algy, in a sudden flushed tone.

He was staring out of the observation window.

The whole human race was swarming with think clusters of stars, the nearest of which was many millions of miles away in the darkness. Yet they had become huge in the vision. Shining out, it looked as if they had shot into a great cone, swelled with immense glowing White diamonds.

"We're three off the Earth's pull?" begged Nick Chance. "Now! We've got to get off that case or the hull!"

Even at his space, there came a startling development.

Nick Chance's eyes flickered like blue flares as he stopped dead, barking a long-drawn cry from him. For the gentle passing of the planet ship's engine had suddenly changed in the most alarming manner.

From the machine there came a crash and judder, as though the giant engines were starting up. The Universe was shuddering from stem to stern like some gigantic volcano in tremor.

"You can't make out?" snarled Captain Nick Chance as he stalked for the pilot house, and tried without avail to budge. "A polder and crypt beneath his ten 'Interplanets—get below, in the hold. Hold out!"

His space millions sprang to life, but Lord Algy Tyford was at front of the ship, shouldered down the companion ladder.

Below, the huge, shooting engines were evidently out of order. They fled the apartment with a dithering, jangling clangor. And the Universe was travelling forward in terrific paces.

"Careful, fellows!" cried Nick Chance above them. "Remember what's seven thousand miles from the Earth and there's very little gravity until we reach the Moon?"

But Algy Tyford had seen the starship once in the skies now, and he made a dash for it.

"Save face, Match, by gosh!" he yelled.

## ★ MONSTERS OF SPACE

THEIR ship landed.

All around them was the debris of the smash-up, the one that was supposed to have destroyed Venus, but out of which had come the way with a bang!

He made a strange figure standing there, for he was tall and lanky and had a wrinkled face with a mouth that appeared to be magnetized by a hard slate wall. Moreover he was clad in what appeared to be a skin dress—only the great muscular biceps seemed to be made solely of toughened glass with an iron coating layer II to it a pink bump on his back. This biform man was leaning back on his shoulder.

"Match!" Lord Algy had leapt up, and was a terrible sight to the strange starship's crew. Match staggered back a little, but he did not appear to feel the blow much, nor to resent it.

"You see I showed away, he mumbled. "I am not going to be on earth when the Moscaen come. You hasn't seen what I've seen why we can't fly. Men's almost hands not look like they're made of metal. Guards that march with great gaiting and enough light for eyes. And the Moscaen, masters of them all. Masters of the Moon—"

A shudder ran through Algy.

"I tell you, he's going to make war on the World," he measured maddily. "I showed away about. And me, I'm a master's servant that I planned from the beginning. I'm going back to the Master of the Moon!"

"What's he planning about?" quipped Algy.

The others looked at one another.

Senior, the great scientist, holding the slide of an eye in his hand. He had been one of the men going on Mars, working to produce the Moon-robot for Doctor Merlin. That man Match had been a close companion, who had helped to carry out Doctor Merlin's designs.

Captain Nick Chance had questioned all the scientific means of the various machines to overthrow and conquer the world.

Doctor Merlin had sailed into space. Now in some strange means he had made himself what he called the Master of the Moon. His solution was to conquer the world with some strange and terrible arms. But Captain Nick Chance knew of his staggering plan, and he was out to smash them.

"What's wrong with the *Universe*?" quipped Match, looking away step by step with a look of fear on his face, whined fare. "I put a space suit on. Something's gone wrong."

"You ought to know," came Algy. "You've thrown a monkey wrench in the machinery."

"Not me," leapt in Match leaping. "I'm going. I reckon you can put it down to the blunders of the Moon—"

He did not want to say more, but made a sudden outside spring. It'd a doos, and out through before they could stop him, leaping the shaking door closed after him.

"Stop!" barked Captain Nick Chance in Algy's voice to follow.

"Huh?" he snorted in response to the mouth's suddenly quivering look of reproach. "This is an art chamber—the art that opens to destroy others. You'd have all destroyed in a second if Match has opened the outer door to escape."

"See the idea?" chased in Salmarine San Phe. "You feed that chamber with air from the generating apparatus in there



Part of the floating ship back, revealing a space of powerful iron glass through which Match could not see the terrible scene about the space ship. "Moscaen without Mind!" said Doctor Merlin. "Watch!"

Then you can open this inner door, walk in and take off your space suit."

"Nasty," sneered Algy bitterly. "But what about our friend with the face like a baked bean, has he kept out space?"

"We'll see what's happening, put in Nick Chance grimly." My opinion now is that the interference is from outside.

Lord has the shallowing and passing! And the steering won't answer to the wheel going to 6, or we look like crashing some-

thing. They followed the space captain up into the control room again.

Nick Chance pressed a release catch, and part of the control shell side of the ship and slowly back, to reveal observation windows of toughened plate glass. Looking out, the space admiral saw a sight that staggered them.

Now Captain Nick Chance could not ignore a violent start.

"Great gosh! I mean to say," came Lord Algy's strained voice. "What are they—monsters?"

"You've said it," agreed Nick Chance grimly. "Look like dragons, don't they?"

And they're changing the *Universe*—kicking at us."

There were two of them, one on either side, streaming through the ethas, and ramming the *Universe* with tremendous bills that lashed like wild pines. Every shock and crash since the *Universe* to the last plane and rival.

These beasts stared in terror at the great, ready, staring controller. They made no move, so normal as if the space admiral was held immobile in a force field, muscles gripped by an unseen power.

"We can't do a thing," rapped Nick Chance. "My ship will be crushed, the steering's gone already!"

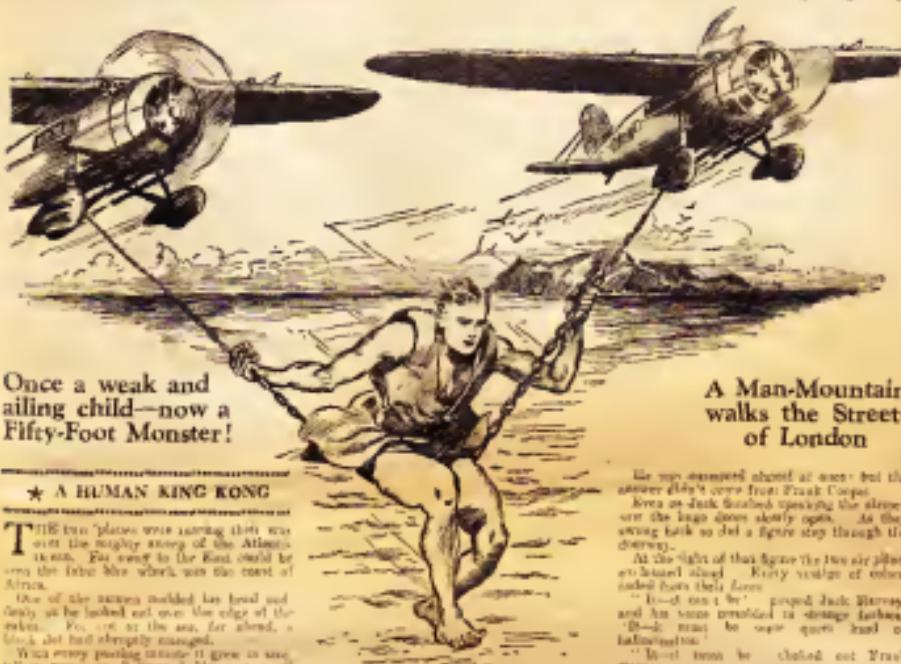
"Padrone! Lord Algy pointed. "Look, that's Match!" he cried.

The starship in the space suit was treadling a ledge that ran for a veritable for along either side of the *Universe*. The plastic space helmet he wore was transparent, and the lack of skin fire on his face was not to be appreciated.

"Gosh, he's in a fix!" quipped Captain Nick Chance. "One of these brutes is trying to spear the poor devil!"



# THE STRIDING TERROR



Once a weak and ailing child—now a Fifty-Foot Monster!

## ★ A HUMAN KING KONG

THE two planes were circling their way over the mighty sweep of the Atlantic Ocean. Far away to the East could be seen the Island Whirl, with the rest of Africa.

One of the planes landed, but had not fully so it landed out over the edge of the cliff. Far out at the sea, far ahead, a black dot had abruptly emerged.

With every passing minute it grew in size, till it was soon distinguishable as a small rocky island.

It was the island for which the two airmen were seeking—the last stopping-place on their round-the-World flight.

Both planes were circling above it. The Island seemed almost unapproachable from the sea, for as all sides it was bounded by steep cliffs. About the cliffs, however, the land was perfectly flat, except for a great ridge of dark rock at the north end.

The first plane circled round, descended close and made a perfect landing. A minute later, the second machine had come to rest alongside.

Both pilots stepped rather stiffly from their planes. "Shaking each other they grasped.

"Well," said Jack Harvey, "that's the last leg over."

Frank Cooper nodded.

"No difficulties so far," he said. "I've never had a better machine and so far the trip has been a absolute joy ride."

The two airmen had been plotting their route—plan—on the latest in automated style. Both had been designed to carry very heavy loads. The two pilots were determined to round the world in order to demonstrate the complete reliability and strength of their machines.

Jack Harvey looked about him.

"We're the first airmen to land on this island," he said. "As you know, I flew over here from Africa some months ago, and spotted the place quite by accident. It makes a perfect landing ground. As far as I know, the island is unoccupied."

Frank Cooper gazed towards the dark ridge

When the giant man climbed to the great chain bridge between them, the two planes went thundering towards England.

of high ground to the north of the island. Immediately he frowned.

"I'm not so very about the place being inhabitable," he retorted. "Fairly flat. A building place, as long as the cliffs." He never spoke in terms above because it seems to have a flat roof and the walls are exactly the same colour as the cliffs.

Jack Harvey looked puzzled.

"Probably more comfortable sample," he said. "A sort of a jaggedy elevation. However, it may give us shelter for us—uh—I feel like a walk. Let's go exploring."

They started towards the edge of high ground, and soon saw the strange building rise clearly.

It was a tremendous size—a building which reached almost as high as the top of the cliffs. It seemed to be the strongest in the state of perfect preservation.

They crossed another building yards. They both stopped simultaneously and almost gasped.

"Look at those doors!" gasped Jack Harvey. "I've never seen anything like them!" His companion nodded.

At the front of the building was an enormous double door—and that must have been at least fifty feet in height.

"Why an earth should anybody build doors that size?" demanded Jack.

## A Man-Mountain walks the Streets of London

He was a sombre giant at once—but the giant as Jack looked spouting the sleeves over the huge arms slowly opens. As they swing back so did a figure step through the doorway.

At the sight of that figure the two air airmen stood still. Early visitors of whom indeed have their legs.

"It's me, I say," gasped Jack Harvey, and his voice trembled in strange fashion. "It's me—man to wear such kind of clothing."

"It's been we chatted out Frank Cooper."

His voice sounded to him like that of a grange.

Such visitors they did such a sense of fear—that they almost refused to cross their doorway.

For the figure they were gazing at seemed to be the whole of the huge doorway. It was the figure of a man—of a man who must have been at least fifty feet in height, a Human King Kong.

There was nothing grotesque about him except his huge height. He was naked except for a thin loincloth, and his perfectly tanned body was a perfect enlarged example of manly physique.

Jack Harvey's fingers traced over his companion's arm.

"Then, taking position straight, the strange figure commenced to walk round about."

Both the airmen had gazed their personal heavy time after time, but this was something different, something that would have to be seen, in the heat of one.

Suddenly Jack Harvey turned on his heels.

"We've got to get away," he gasped. "Back to the planes quick—before he reaches us."

Both turned and ran as they had never run before. The huge figure linked them together to walk quickly. He overlooked them with the greatest of ease.

"We'll never do it," gasped Frank Cooper. "We'll just get to the planes in time."

He pulled a revolver out of his belt, and firing quickly, he managed to fire.

Creak! Creak! Creak!

## Nightmare Man demands a Passage to England

If the bullets in the giant whom they meted in have no effect upon him. Having escaped every encounter, Frank Cooper took to his heels again, but he made't the ghost of a chance now.

Suddenly a huge hand descended upon him and his was picked up, swinging into the air, and held dangling there like a toy. Strangely enough the huge fingers handled him quite gently. Then the giant reached forward again and his other hand picked up Jack Harvey. He held the two struggling men in front of him for a few seconds and gazed at them.

Then eyes dilated by pain, they looked into his great eyes.

The giant, apart from his tanned skin, appeared to be a white man. There was nothing repulsive about his face. As a matter of fact it was rather handsome. But it was a face fully made times the size of that of a normal man.

The giant spoke no word. Abruptly he turned on his heels and started back towards the strange building. He passed through the huge doors.

The two men were shocked.

For they found that the building consisted of one tremendous room. It was furnished with chairs, tables and a bed, but everything was also twice normal size.

The two men were suddenly lowered and placed in the corners of a huge armchair. Then comes pulled up another chair and, leaning himself into it, sat facing them.

He jolted forward.

Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper received perhaps their greatest shock of all then.

"Now, gentlemen," said the giant, "we can talk."

So ended the two armchair passed.

The giant had spoken in English—the English of an educated man, and these few words made the whole affair appear more bizarre and amazing than ever.

### ★ SON OF A SCIENTIST

IT was Jack Harvey who stilled his voice. "Who—what are you?" he groaned, and his voice sounded definitely weak and thin compared with the deep-throated tones of the giant.

The giant was turned forward in his chair.

"This is what I propose to tell you," he said. "I've been troubling your dreams ever since I know that you intended making your last stop at our island."

Both men were blushed up in heat.

"You know we were coming," groaned Jack.

The giant nodded.

"You," he said. "Maybe it seems strange to you, but I have a mission set on this island. I'm in touch with all the affairs of the world."

His two listeners could only groan.

"I'm as sure if I started you, went to the giant. "I know you would be scared of me, so I had to make sure that you had no chance of getting back to your aeroplane and so getting away. But I want you to understand this right from the very beginning: I never yet let anyone whatsoever. I need your help, and if you give me that you'll have no reason to worry. So, the test, I've just an ordinary thinking man like yourselves. The only difference between us is only that I'm about twice your size."

For a moment almost a wild look passed over his face. Then his mouth set to grim follow. "Gentlemen," he said, "maybe you've heard of John Devine, the famous scientist and inventor?"

Both men nodded.

"Well," was the next surprising remark. "John Devine was my father. I am John Devine."

"Huh," groaned Jack Harvey. "—but I am John Devine one when I was a boy. He's not just an ordinary man now."

"Nevertheless," said the huge figure, "he was my father. But let me tell you my story from the very beginning," Frank was forced to applaud them.

"Well, I was born," began the giant, "I was a very small, strong child. My father, who no doubt you will remember, was an enormous athlete as he was a scientist, was horrified—he said that he can would grow up to be a soldier. He then upon determined to make every use of his scientific knowledge to us strong to make us strong and well."

"To do a long story short, he succeeded, every month with a certain serum. He continued for years despite the fact that it seemed to have no effect upon me. When I was the years of age I was still an under-sized, pale-faced youngster."

He sighed.

"Then," he continued, "the serum began to take effect. Suddenly I began to grow at an amazing rate. When I was eleven I was nearly six feet in height and broad and strong with it. My father did everything he knew to stop my rapid growth, but he failed completely."

"Knowing that I was rapidly becoming a freak, my father determined to take me away from England. He knew of the island, and it was here that I was brought. There are other people on the island. They live in the sea caves on the island's northern end. They are little more than savages and they look upon me as a god. My father, however, knew these savages and he caused them to kill the horse. My father had to kill us until his death. Before he died, however, he passed on most of his knowledge to me."

The giant's features were still staring speechless at him. The story was almost incredible. And yet it might be true. For the man's voice in front of them was still very high as he was so much.

"You may wonder how I have lived here," went on John Devine. "Well, my father had certain friends whom he took quite confidence. One of them here on the West Coast of Africa. Every few weeks he sends a ship over here filled with supplies. When the ship arrives I always keep me at night. I only eat small food occasionally. My appetite is so large that the supply ship would have to run almost every other night."

"Luckily, however, my father taught me how to make certain concentrated food tablets. These keep me fit and will fit the mouth between the coming of the supply ship."

He stood loosely at the two men who looked at ridiculous sitting in the huge armchairs.

"Still now, gentlemen," he said, "I propose to you, how you can be of service to me. You know that I'm as Englishman and that I left England at eleven years of age. For years I suffered from these visions. I want to return to England, if only for a short visit. And you, gentlemen, are going to take me there. We start to return tomorrow."

The two men sat back speechless.

"But, we can't," groaned Jack Harvey.

"You—you couldn't get me either at our place. It'd—it's impossible."

John Devine shook his head.

"I've thought it out very carefully," he said, "and I've already made arrangements. Under my direction the inhabitants of this island have forged a large chain. I know that your planes are enormous vehicles and that both are capable of carrying the members here. Well, in the morning I propose to take that chain to your boat machine. There's a leather chain in the centre of the chain in which I shall be able to sit. In this fashion I intend that you shall take us to England in the morning—sailed on a chain along between your two planes."

He drew his breath sharply again.

"Gentlemen," he said, "it's a resolve for you to protect. My mind is made up and I am determined to go. And now—let me see to your wants."

He clapped his hands and a servant entered.

"Master," said John Devine, "please dinner. These gentlemen will eat at the small table."

Quite a good dinner was served. The two men sat at a small table which was placed at the edge of the large room. It seemed on that occasion that John Devine had not been taking himself with concentrated food tablets. He disposed of a meal that would have satisfied ten ordinary men.

The meal over, he indicated a couch, and gently lifted the two guests up so as to. It goes too high for them to reach without stretching.

"There will be ample room for both of you there," he said. "I suggest that you sleep, me to morrow you have a long journey in front of you."

He smiled.

"You'll write your face," he said. "If you make any attempt to escape. As a matter of fact, I shall not go to bed tonight. While you're sleeping I'll be busy taking half a dozen revolver bullets out of my legs. I'm afraid an ordinary bullet has little effect upon me; for some reason my skin is particularly tough. The unfortunate I see in a pephys-labs will get rid of these half a dozen bullets without causing me any inconvenience whatever. Take my advice and sleep."

The two men slept at just fashion. It seemed to them that they were living some horrendous nightmare. But though they panted sleepily restlessly it made no difference. The nightmare was about to end.

Both of them were warned the World War planes be able to hold the huge bags of John Devine, the Max Muster, when he was using them there in the morning?

Only then could tell. . . .

### ★ THE FLIGHT OF THE GIANT

IN the early hours of the morning the huge, spindly figure of John Devine left the strange building. He was alone, save his two hosts, and when he returned he found that the two visitors were awake.

"Good morning, gentlemen," he said as he lifted them off the couch. "It's time to the ground. You'll be glad to know that everything is ready. We start immediately after breakfast."

The same author who had prepared dinner the night before prepared breakfast.

Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper, however, had very little appetite. Their guide John Devine made a tremendous meal.

When breakfast was over he went to a large cupboard half way up the wall and took a tremendous blanket and something like an Army's cloak.

He saw the surprise in the eyes of his guests.

"You're probably wondering who our target is," he said. "As a matter of fact not one of ours was made by any of the natives whom I've taught to be handy with a needle. The cloak was made from Africa."

"I find clothes extremely during the daytime and find much difficulty without them, but at night a girls very cold, and I wear this out. It will be most up at the cold air when we're in Europe. But no trouble—when you gentlemen are ready we will proceed to the plane."

There was silence to be heard by waiting time as Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper walked with the giant in the two planes, always ready to keep up with him. They knew it would be hopeless to attempt to now for the planes in an effort to make a get-away.

They looked in amazement when they saw the huge chain that was lying between the two machines. Each end of it had already been fixed into position, and it was the centre

## A Pocket Handkerchief as large as a tablecloth

at the chasm there was a sort of John's right arrangement in which it would be possible for John Dester to sit.

Dester smiled at them.

"You need not worry about my safety, gentlemen," he said. "I know the possible on the plane to travel safe will through the air when they are planned together, I'll make it able to keep pace with you when you take off. As my weight will be a severe burden to you, however, I've planned off quite a bit of your weight. I believe, however, that I'm left enough to take us back to England. I anticipate that we shall overtake the English Channel just before sunset."

He picked up the heavy chain.

"As soon as you are in air, get out of the seat."

Both drivers, using their propellers and struggled into the cockpit.

Both drivers were strained and nervous-looking. They were acting out of the greatest gamble they had ever had with the air. Would the planes be able to fly with the huge weight of John Dester suspended between them?

It was something they wouldn't be able to observe until they had actually taken off.

The engine began to throb. There at a signal from Jack, both planes started forward together. They began to gather speed and became than John Dester started to move. He covered the ground in great strides. When the planes finally took off he had only just landed into a ride.

Up and up went the planes and now—the chasm was becoming fast.

Both planes suddenly accelerated suddenly and these wings dipped suddenly. John Dester's huge body left off the ground and the planes had taken his weight.

For a moment Jack Harvey thought his plane was going to collapse. Dangerously low, swaying with the tremors, slowly, but gathering suddenly, the plane pointed itself back so that John Dester, left the harness in defiance, but that he had now succeeded in getting the planes more or less on an even keel.

"Hanging out he saw that John Dester had drawn himself up so that he was now sitting in the cockpit alone, and holding on to the chain with both hands.

But then the plane slowed, suddenly, and suddenly was completely disappeared. Up and up went the planes until they were flying at an enormous height. Would John Dester be able to stand the intense cold? It seemed so, however, for very now and then he heard another one of the engines growled cheerfully.

Early that morning they flew high over the Rock of Gibraltar. Anybody who saw the planes now, was amazed at the strange thing that was happening between them. At such a height, however, it was problematic whether they could ever what strange thing was.

Over Spain passed the planes. But the weight of John Dester, always pulling the planes sideways, retarded their speed to a standstill, and Jack Harvey, looking at his poised grime, became worried. It seemed to him that his patrol couldn't possibly last for three to cross the Channel.

High over the Pyrenees they flew, and over France was below them. On and on with

the sun beginning to set towards the West. It looked as though they would reach England in darkness.

Jack Harvey almost shuddered then. He was revering the form of the officials at Coventry Airport when they came down out of the night bringing their strange passenger with them.

Another hour went by.

Dick knew then that it was impossible for them to get to the English Channel. His mind was nearly buried. He must work up a spot to land.

At that moment he saw French Dugay signaling from the other plane. Dugay was critically in difficulties, too, for he was signaling that he had to land.

They were racing down and surgery the coast below. beneath them was the green sweep of an enormous field. It looked as though it might make a perfect landing place.

There was no way to accommodate their demands to land to their passengers. Both planes began to vibrate drunkenly.

Jack Harvey was running now.

Would the great be driven to death as they landed?

Leading out he saw that John Dester had evidently worked what was happening for he had freed himself out of the harness and was now hanging from the chain in his hands.

Knives and daggers were the ground.

Of course, John Dester struck the ground. He went forward in a mighty leap. Any ordinary man striking the ground at that speed would have been killed instantaneously. It was only for a mere fifty feet high, however.

At the wings of the planes reached ground John Dester was running really.

When the planes came to a stop as did he down the chasm he fell into holding. There, running forward, he lifted that Jack Harvey out from under Dugay and at that instant he was across now that the tree was black with fire.

"You did that purposely?" he said, and as he was about to jump on the cockpit he thought, "For once there is no at being to dash my bones out."

For one dreadful second Jack Harvey found he was going to be thrown to the ground.

"We couldn't help it," he protested suddenly. "You didn't have an enough pilot. The two are day. Look for your self."

The anger passed from John Dester's face at once.

"I will not," he said. "Hold down he pointed out the cockpit. I sensed that he knew how to read a general's gaze.

He snorted then.

"I am," he said. "I long your position both of you. I take it we are in France's Well. I've no wish to remain here. The sooner we get past the better I'll be pleased."

Jack Harvey looked at him.

"I don't know where we are. Be answered. And goodness only knows where we'll get past from."

John Dester snorted.

"I'll go in search of pilot," he returned.

Before I go, however, I must put you to

the majority of being cut up. You see, I don't want to return and tell that you're missing."

He took a handkerchief from a pocket in his coat. Of course it was as large as a full-sized tablecloth. Tearing strips from it he quickly bound the two arms and laid them on the ground underneath one of the planes.

"I shan't be long," he remarked.

Then he was striking away, and each stroke was a good forty yards.

For the first time a true big fist in hand was walking in the sun countryside of France.

## ★ THE STRIDING TERROR IN ENGLAND

THERE was no sign of a building to be seen anywhere and the large figure of John Dester went toward in a straight line.

It was a man working in the fields more than a mile away who saw him first of all. For a few moments he simple stood and stared. Then, overreaching in his fear began to run with flight.

Suddenly a woman came from her home and running, he raised his hand.

Her name, he had heard this woman and now he saw the meaning now. He began to run.

He didn't. He had heard this woman and now he saw the meaning now. He began to run.

He could not tell me where to find pilot," he told himself.

When he reached that the ghost-like figure was rapidly leaving down from the French peasant but he held constantly.

Running at the top of his voice he continued to run in circles. When John Dester was almost upon him he being himself down flat upon his back.

John Dester pulled him up.



panic-stricken, the peasants went scampering out of the village as the famous King Kong came striding along with the giant rolls of petro-

## The Striding Terror comes down in the Sea

"I've no wish to kill you," he said, and his French was perfect. "I wish you to leave off them. For the men had strangled men in his group and then—his head had fallen backwards."

He had finished.

Very carefully John Dexter had him down on the grass.

"He was running in this direction," he told himself. "That means there must be a village somewhere near at hand."

Leaving the movement men he strided onwards, and for a minute later he saw the smoke of a small French village. It was too far away to be a hollow.

But somebody must have seen the approach of the huge figure. The air was alive with noise now. There were shouts and yells, shrill whistles and then somewhere a church bell began to clang weirdly.

John Dexter strided onwards. There was a very worried look on his face.

"Somehow I've got to make people understand that I mean no harm," he muttered to himself. "It will never do if people fly at my approach like this."

For he could see the village clearly now, and people were streaming away from it at top speed. He saw women carrying babies, with children clinging to their skirts, and behind them went a number of men.

When he entered the village it was absolutely deserted. But a real war is to be seen nowhere. His coming had frightened every peasant out of the place.

But at the end of the village street stood a garage. John Dexter saw the painted pump-pipes and recognized them from pictures he had seen in newspapers.

Reaching the garage he bent down and examined the pumps. He soon discovered how they worked and sent a stream of petrol flowing from one of the feeding pipes.

But how was he to carry the petrol back to the aeroplane?

At the back of the garage two tremendous water-hoses, stretching nearly six feet high, caught his attention. He picked them up and poured the water out of them. With the remnants of his handkerchief he wiped the remaining moisture out of the barrels. Then, taking the feeding pipe of one of the pumps, he filled each barrell three-quarters full with petrol.

Quickly he seized the long barrels up on his shoulders. Having obtained his petrol supplies, he commenced to walk back to the stationary plane.

But things had been happening. Not far from the village was a fort, in which a regiment of French Cavalry was stationed. It was no too long that the terrified villagers had fled. At first their flight was absolutely disordered.

Then, through his field glasses, the commander of the fort saw the huge figure striding away across the fields with the barrels on his shoulders.

He gave orders quickly, and soon mounted soldiers were racing from the fort. Another detachment rode for a ridge of high ground, taking a small field gun with them.

Suddenly came the sound of an explosion. John Dexter felt the wind of something which flew not far in front of him. Almost immediately there was a devastating roar and some fire as three hundred yards to the side of him a great volume of earth exploded.

A shell had been fired in front of him in an effort to make him stop.

Turning he saw the horses staggering along the ridge towards him. He realized that the gun had been fired, not with any intention of hitting him, but as a warning for him to stop.

He had no intention of stopping.

He burst out a run, and reached the trees in safety. He quickened the pace.

"I've got the petrol," he cried. "Open your tanks for me so that I can pour it in. And then—then I'll get away immediately. If

these men stop me getting into the air again I'll hold you responsible."

In his haste he had struck a nail of the metal as he splashed it into the tanks. Then, lifting both arms he placed them in the cockpit.

The cavalry were racing across the field towards them now. The figures of the horses began to roar.

Next instant they were shooting forward, and between them was John Dexter.

The line of cavalry pulled up, and the soldiers jumped from their saddles.

There came a sharp order.

In the gloom took the answer. John Dexter was pulled up into space and the cavalry were gone.

Crash! Crash! Crash!

But by now Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper knew how to allow for the tremendous weight of their passenger. They got away quickly and the side helmets caused no damage at all.

Up and up they soared until John Dexter was care more seated in the boat's seat.

They were many thousands of feet up when they flew over Paris. Dark silhouettes

seemed the landmasses floated on the surface.

But the huge splash with which John Dexter had struck the water had created two terrific waves which made havoc of the winged-boats wings. Moreover, the length of Harry chain was dragging them down. Both planes began to settle.

Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper clambered out of the cockpit, and as they did so a mighty hand closed over each of them.

"It's all right," said the voice of John Dexter. "I can swim. Fetch yourselves on my shoulders. I'll get you sailors all right."

He dragged off the cumbersome blanket coat, and then the two airmen found their selves seated on John Dexter's broad shoulders.

In a few moments the giant was swimming ashore. He cut through the water at an astonishing speed.

Jack Harvey calculated that they were about five miles from the English coast, but since the sailors were to John Dexter what half a mile is to an ordinary man. It seemed to Jack that the giant was cutting through the water with the speed of a motor-boat.

Suddenly they felt themselves lifted into the air.

"Hang on," came Dexter's voice. "I'm reaching bottom."

With the two airmen clinging to his shoulders he went striding through the sea.

The path might right of white cliffs ahead, and then the last gleam of twilight faded. When they came to the white cliffs it was dark.

They found that the sea beat right against the rocks, but fortunately the cliffs weren't particularly high. Raising up words John Dexter placed first Jack Harvey and then Frank Cooper on top of them. Holding a grip with his hands he then pulled himself up.

He gained ground, but not a light one to be seen anywhere. They had suddenly come into a very deserted stretch of coast.

"John," Dexter sagged. "Well, I'm here, thanks to your assistance I'm in England. I think the last thing you can do is to stay here until dawn comes."

That night the newsboys of over England, a patriotic, stale. They cried simultaneously宣告ing the "wonder" "The Striding Terror." The news was whacked all over the front pages of the evening newspapers. For the story of the huge man who had been seen in France had been telegraphed all over the world. The French authorities had issued from the Headquarters a note underneath the signature that they were English mechanics.

"This enormous man is evidently coming to England," said the newspapers. "No body knows who he is or from whence he has come. All people living on the South Coast are advised to remain within doors until the coming of daylight."

But a little later the newspapers came out with further items of news.

"The Striding Terror" had been discovered on Channel."

It appeared that a dog on the Island had seen the two planes crash from a distance. The amazed dog had seen the huge figure of a man suspended between them, and later the vessel had come alongside the partially submerged wings of the planes. They had managed to grapple those alongside and the huge chain had been pulled aboard. But there were no signs of the two pilots at their mysterious passage.

And all the time the Striding Terror was seen on the South Coast, scaring the coming of dawn.

The Striding Terror comes in England, pamphlets with them and signs as they were all over, like the streets of London, and when Big Ben had struck twelve, the Striding Terror had reached the Metropolis. Thrills such as you have never seen before—go in the next great story of the Striding Terror, in "Screams" with next.

## Can Man Make MONSTER MEN?

### Giants Made to Order

SOME folk may scoff at the idea of a monster man, a human King Kong, such as the author has created in this great new series, "The Striding Terror." But—

A scientist in the University of California, after working for four years on the pituitary gland, one of the Endocrine Glands situated almost in the centre of the head, has succeeded in finding a treatment which enabled a small child of ten, who had stopped growing, to stand up two inches in two years.

In working on animals the scientist has produced a duplication dog four feet long, and he now believes he has found a growth "extract" which will develop giants or dwarfs almost at will.

Fifty feet men may be walking the streets of London yet . . .

were keeping as high as they possibly could, and just as the sun went down they saw the gleam of the English Channel before them, once again Jack Harvey was looking in his plane again.

They had been as much perturbed in their attempt to make a quick getaway that they calculated they would have only enough to get them across the Channel.

Could they get across while it was light enough for them to find a landing place?

On and on they flew.

Then the French coast was faintly there and they were over the Channel.

Jack Harvey was beginning now. This should have made another landing in France. His petrol was almost gone. They'd never get across the Channel.

One of his engines began to sputter and sputter. Could he keep going?

Then, abruptly he felt a downward pull. Looking out of his cockpit he saw Frank Cooper signaling to him eagerly. Frank was going down.

Jack realized then that Frank Cooper had also run out of petrol.

His mouth set in a firm line.

They were going down into the Channel to all probability this was the end of their strange adventure.

Down and down.

Both airmen handled their machines gingerly. Instead of crashing they glided them seawards, so that for a few

# The REBEL ROBOTS

Genius No. 1 Rebels, Destroys its Master and the Reign of Terror Begins

## ★ ROBOT WITH A MASTER MIND

"DESTROY!"

The master command resounded in the mind of the two robots, resounding, ever other thought regular in that strange mass of electronic apparatus, raised in terrible message down the neural controls of the lumbering automata.

His mind possessed of a desire, he started to his feet from where he sat on the great stool, then before a column of machinery, walled with heat, uttering great daws from the gallery of the gigantic power house.

The place was like a cathedral, a vast domed building with a gleaming central pedestal an altar, galleries lined with thundering machinery, throbbing their power, for a mile. A temple to the god Mariana.

As he made his rotations wug down the gallery the giant Robot passed under a massive metal walkway, bending machine, perforated cylinders lumbering backwards and forwards as they went about their duties.

He came to the end of the gallery, slid with a great roar and sailed out into a giant hall of smoke and dust.

With heavy steps alighting on the metal floor he clattered across the hall, then open another door opposite and stood on the threshold, electric eyes glowing.

Before a desk of glass and steel, gleaming with switch knobs and multi-coloured controls, sat the grey-haired figure of Max Ugo the Master of the Mechanical Squad.

His keen eyes glared on a god before him.

He was working at a mass of mathematical data.

He looked up sharply as a dull hammer gave warning of the opening of the door. Then his thin, delicate features registered their horror as he sat up and recognized the mechanical monster standing in the doorway.

It was Genius No. 1—the Robot with a master mind.

"My master," Max ——. The words trembled across the lips of the scientist.

The control for Genius No. 1 had not yet been connected, was not even now working at the figure?

And yet here he was standing in the shadow of the old man's power machine. Stutter in his very thoughts, his sit, expressions features, the Robot stood glancing at the scientist.

"Destroy!"

The word (thundering and resounding in his mind, the Robot lumbered forward.

Patience, the scientist waited. "Curdle to coil, stop!"—impossible to stop that relentless terror. Only the destruction of the mind, that delicate apparatus on the shell of the Robot, could render him helpless. Max Chanceller stalked at a lope on his desk.

Then Genius No. 1 had reached the desk and without a warning, without any change of expression, the Robot raised his great steel arm and brought it crashing down on to the grey-haired head of the scientist.

A with some warning the old man, and even at the death-dinging arm came hurtling down he dodged under, and took the paralyzing blow on the shoulder.

As John dashed upwards the gleaming control panel the Robot raised the helpless body of Peizer, ready to hurl it down on to the thundering machinery below.

He staggered back, holding his useless arm by his side. Back still he sat against the wall. But still the gleaming eyes followed his every movement, and with one sweep of his great arm Genius No. 1 hurled aside the big desk, smashing it over so that no contents went flying, vast unspun, light fused with vital bodies.

Then he lumbered across to where the mass of his creation stood trembling by the wall. The Robot's claws of hands were pressed on the scientist, and the old man screamed aloud in his terror.

The red arm of Genius No. 1 rose and fell again, and the scream was stifled in the scientist's throat. He slumped at the floor, striking up his death agony.

As though it were a piece of stone, the Robot picked up the body, raised it high above his hand.

Even as he did so the door of the main crashed open and John Hogart, one of the attendants, a young automaton, who had come to answer to his ring, came staggering through the mass, horrified by the crashing stones.

He stopped short as his own tool in the gleaming snow, and, while he watched, Genius No. 1 raised the severed hand above his head and sent the body sailing through the glass windows at the other end of the room.

There was a shattering of glass than the shell flew as the body crashed down on to the stones below.

John started in his horror, the young attendant saw the giant Robot turn and he dashed towards the door again at the tremor lumbering over to him.

There, when the Robot Robot was almost on him, the attendant's nerve gave. He turned and ran yelling as he went.

Conscious of the necessity, but fearing only the deadly command, the Robot lumbered out of the room, back across the hall and into the power-house.

For a moment he suffered the worse of thundering, crackled power—the giant dynamo. The massive iron machine, the gigantic revolving globe in the centre of the room, sending out its ringing roar. Then he went over to the control panel, turned over two levers, whirled a giant wheel, then clapped back two valves.

The result was catastrophic. A gigantic explosion took the control like a shot. A white, glaring light blazed out power-house. The great metal globe came smashing down, pounding the great machine below it to a mass of twisted metal. Thundering power machine consumed by destruction.

The thundering roar of the power-house became a roar of thundering fury. Metal lurched and rattled, walls fell, the great glass doors of the place, already shattered by the explosion, came crashing down. Falling glass in every direction.

Blissfully, writhing aside. Then the weaker fingers of death...

Shattered by flying bits of machinery, assailed by devolving hands, Genius No. 1 lumbered through a hole that had been blown out of the wall of the power-house, not real

## The Steel Man Disappears In The River



The army of Red Robots, a hundred strong, went striding after the Rebel.

the street, where terrified crowds watched the scene of desolation.

The streets were in an uproar. With the explosion in the power-house every Robot in the city had ceased to work. Dozens of public vehicles had become piles of twisted metal, and there had been another all over the city. Mechanical engineers had come darting down from heights, all control gears Robot servants had sharply ceased to operate. The whole mechanical organization of the city was smashed.

And into this scene of disorder stalked the Red Robot.

Hunting while or killing with a single blow of its great steel fist any who stood in its path, he stalked into the country outside the power house and lumbered off down the road as if he had a fixed destination in view.

A car came pouring towards him, turned aside to avoid him, but the glow of its lights unloosed the Robot, and he hurtled himself against the vehicle.

Crash! The car issued right over, roof smashing to pieces, roofboard splintering. The Robot went flying; sprawled into the gutter.

Red Fury sailing his road, Genesis No. 1, poised himself up, went back to the wounded car, and began literally to tear it to bits.

The machinery houses the scene of flying woodwork and metal, and two human beings, hurtling out with the wreckage.

Then, apparently satisfied, the Robot continued his interrupted way down the street.

Lights blazed particularly to illuminate the houses by his road. An electric light standard was torn out of the ground and twisted to a mass of shapeless metal. A shop window, glazing with broken glass, was smashed to pieces and the contents scattered in a wild fury of destruction.

People ran screaming from the path of the mechanical madman. And still he went trampling on in his frenzied career of destruction.

\* \* \* \* \*

Welder John Hughes and Peter Koster, old Max Chancellor's two young assistants, surveyed the ruins of the power house of the Robots.

"Dear old Max," groaned out John. "The work of a life time destroyed in a moment."

"Thank God he has not here to see it," joked Peter. "Heaven knows where the control came from."

"The old man was working on it tonight," said John. "Told me he hoped to get it

fixed up by the end of the month. It's an emergency, Peter."

It was, indeed, a mystery. For a year now, Robot workers, the invention of Max Chancellor, had been in use in the city—still, to a certain extent, in an experimental state.

They gained their energy from various rays sent out from this one great power-house, and were enabled to work by the exciting apparatus in their shells.

Into this apparatus so many thought impulses were impelled, and by means of intricate muscle control from the "knee," the Robots were able to perform simple duties such as tending machines, domestic tasks, driving vehicles on regulated tracks, building and cleaned houses.

Each Robot was able to accommodate no more than half a dozen thought impulses, and these were regulated by means of switches set in the backs of the robots.

But four months ago Max Chancellor had been working to create a Robot that could accommodate in its mechanical brain all the thought impulses of the human mind—and more.

He had succeeded for beyond his wildest dreams. Genesis No. 2—the Robot with the human mind—had been created, but as far as control had been lost.

Now, suddenly, this very night, some unknown agency had gained control of Genesis No. 1, and the mechanical master the scientist had created had in turn destroyed him.

A terrible shudder fixed the two young scientists. Late reports from the police said that the Robot had last hour been entering the city. Seconds past and after him had been ruthlessly destroyed, but further than the river no trace of it could be found.

"What an earth are we going to do?" groaned Peter.

"In the first place," retorted John, "a new power house will have to be built. The Robot expansion must go on—it is a law to mankind. And in the meantime we must work on the control for Genesis No. 1. If someone has gained some power over him, as he has obtained some natural control, there's no telling what will happen. Why, the Robots can be duplicated, and in time a whole army of them could descend on the city and wipe it out of existence. You realize that?"

"Gosh!" ejaculated Peter. "Well, I better get out a warning. Negative rays to blow away the brain control will be the only safeguard."

"That's an idea," returned John. "Let's get to it."

The young scientists put out their warning to the police, and the story of the invasion was spread by the newspapers, broadcast over the radio.

But little did the scientists realize the terror that was about to descend on the city.

### ★ CROWN JEWELS ARE STOLEN

THE last of the old castle, with its great towers and great battlements, reared in gloomy glory into the many skies of the night sky.

Light flashed in the shattered windows, another passed backwards and forwards to there finally light in the other, curtains.

Suddenly, without the slightest warning, the terrific blast of an explosion lit the open gates of the castle, smashing it to pieces, killing two nobles who stood near.

Through the smoking ruins stalked a giant Robot, a mechanical man who clattered over the cold, stone stones of the courtyard, walked into the tower, smashing down doors as it went, lolling with mighty blows any who dared to stand in its path with sword or bayonet.

Up narrow steps, through a smaller courtyard, with its demolition apparently well known, the Robot stalked. It reached a heavily secured tower, smashed the door down with great blows of its steel arms, and walked into the tower where a steel grille, with a glass case behind it, stood in the centre.

Bye clanking, the mechanical man tore aside the steel bars as though they were as many sticks, smashed the grille with a blow, red tore out the jewels that rested in their velvet settings—diamonds, emeralds, pearls of State, precious stones—the Crown Jewels of the country.

Unconcernedly strolling thus into a dark closet along its walls, the steel being clothed back the way it had come.

Beams were shattering, soldiers running, as the Robot stalked down the steep stairs, and a fusil of steel crushed him when he stepped out into the courtyard.



The giant Robot stalked through the city of darkness, the helpless figures of Peter Koster held under his great steel arm.

A dozen rifles flashed fire, but the shots exploded themselves helplessly in the metal plates of the mechanical man. One shot past eat a flashing eye, but none found that vital brittle mechanism.

Then the Robot buried himself into the heap of steel, crushed ingots and sun-sets, killing and trampling as he went.

The arrows of men in agony were flying from the courtyard as he lumbered through the shattered door, and, before with his one flashing eye, tramped right into the night . . .

At the same moment that evening a large driver containing a thousand of gold at the docks had one terrible vision of two flashing electric eyes behind a gleaming steel sun-visor to wait in sternly.

The public guards standing near shared the same fate before they could get their whistles to either lips.

Then the big men with all valuable had been driven away into the night, a mechanical man at the wheel . . .

Next morning the country was aglow. The newspaper spoke of the "Madison Devil," and Mac Quinney was exonerated for creating the monster. Voices of a multitude sang drowning upon the city and marching bands roared as they lay in the streets and crowded up to the more noisy news-stand papers.

Verde was aghast.

Two nights later the long-time since of a grand bank was blasted to atoms by a new and deadly explosive that shook the whole city.

Thousands of pounds in gold coins, bonds, and securities disappeared before the police could get one even to see the staggering monsters that were responsible. Two hundred bodies were found among the debris, but the money had gone!

The same night, too, while all the fans was going on about the bank, the most famous man in the country had a fortune. Seven eight hundred, and a crowd of policemen brought to the scene by the warning flashes, went to their death, and some of the most valuable jewels and coins in the world were missing from their cases next morning. But those who saw the weird traces that took these jewels—their lips were sealed for ever.

The country lost its sense then. It became staggered, horrified. A man spoke of seeing a steel piston rising out of the river, welling out of the water. The newspaper splashed the story.

In an effort to prevent panic, the Home Secretary called out the troops, and armament was paraded the city. The newspapers told of the two young scientists, John Hight and Peter Keeler, and promised that in a week they would have ready an apparatus that would render powerless the striking machine. Anything to prevent the detailed point that was bound to come.

John and Peter were aghast at the lie. They had no apparatus ready. They were no further advanced in their efforts to invent a coated that had been on the day of the old scientist's death.

"It's an outrage," Peter said John. "If we can't show them something at the end of the week, and the terror goes on, we'll probably be lynched."

"There's only one hope," said John slowly. "And that's to get the power house ready—at least the ray glass—and put our invention thought capable into the hands of an army of mechanical workers. The engine to destroy all robots other than those with some simple distinguishing mark."

"Gosh! That's a notion," breathed Peter. "A bunch of the robots. Let them fight one another. Then the free fall again. But how on earth can we get the ray glass working to time? There's another month's work yet."

"Get the Office of Works to help—recruit every available engineer and an army of workers. In a week we could be ready."

# John TRANUM

*The World Famous Parachutist tells SCOOOPS how he will soon be*

## Jumping 15 Miles out of SPACE

**He's going up as a piece of ballast**

**F**IFTEEN miles up into the stratosphere in the open basket of a balloon. Then to jump out—out into space.

That's what John Tranum, the world-famous parachutist, wants to do now.

He has already made nearly two thousand jumps in all parts of the world—yes, even in Japan—and has been falling out of the sky since 1918.

He leads a dangerous life—flying and falling out of the sky daily, circling planes for the big fliers in the Spanish and Death, and jumping out of the clouds from all heights anywhere and at any time.

His greatest achievement was his recent jump from five miles up with a drop of four miles before opening his parachute.

Now Mr. Tranum wants to go fifteen miles up into the stratosphere and to drag with him a mile of the earth before putting the ripcord.

"And how do you propose to do this?" I asked Mr. Tranum, when I met him on one of his lecture tours recently.

The famous parachutist, a blue-eyed, short-jawed man with a skin, hair, mouth and forehead tan, spoke quietly.

"An American scientist is coming over to England to make an attempt to go twenty miles up into the stratosphere in an open balloon. I hope to persuade him to take me up as a piece of ballast."

"Ballast?" I queried.

"That's right. Two hundred pounds of it. The scientist will have to take up ballast, which he will retain as he goes up into space. I am hoping that he will take me up as part of the ballast, for a distance of fifteen miles—then I will be the last two hundred pounds to be thrown over!"

### "FASTEST POSSIBLE" FALL

"**WHAT** will you wear?" I asked. "At fifteen miles up won't the air be thin and cold, but you?" And what about the very low pressure you'll find at that height?"

"The biggest difficulty will be the cold," returned Mr. Tranum. "I shall wear the special spacesuit I used on my five-mile jump, and the oxygen

"You've got it!" chorused Peter, and together they went off to work on the suit.

It meant hours of sweat and hot toil, but finally they got their way, and on the following day a regular army of engineers and workers descended on the new power house that during the past month had been gradually growing out of the earth.

Day and night shifts were made up, and everything else, even stratospheric work, was set aside in one great effort to get the come machine and instruments ready.

The workers' bodies were painted red as a distinguishing mark, and John took care of introducing the new stratospheric thought into the mechanical minds.

The paler were working hard, too. The



efficiency of oxygen. Tests in a decompression chamber have shown that the low pressure at fifteen miles up—so even more will not affect the human being to any great extent.

"But won't the speed of your fall through this terrible distance cause you to lose consciousness anyway?" I asked.

"At one time it was generally supposed that a man who fell out of the sky from a great height was dead before he reached the ground."

John Tranum laughed.

"No, in my free-fall jump, I reached the maximum speed at which it is possible to fall—I couldn't fall any faster. And I was quite comfortable. I could have gone on falling all day if necessary."

### LIFEBELTS OF THE AIR

"**BUT** what is the use of it all?"

Perhaps it was a pertinent question, but that was how it struck me, and probably thousands of people who have seen the film of John Tranum's delayed jump have asked themselves the same question. Apart from the shall we add, advantage of it there really doesn't seem to be much use in jumping fifteen miles out of space.

But John Tranum soon changed my opinion.

"Remember most experiments," he said quickly. "The experiment failed by the time the first jumped out of an aeroplane with a primitive ripcord, have been the means of saving the lives of thousands of airmen."

"Man flying through space will be accustomed to flying through the ordinary atmosphere in to day, and there will naturally arise emergencies when the men will have to leave their space ships and jump free."

"The experience I shall gain in passing from the stratosphere will show whether the paratrooper or the 'flibbet' for space flight, and this is the means of saving the lives of the inmates of the spaces. That is why I want to make this new jump."

silver was dragged, boulders rolled, and every tributary systematically searched. But it was all to no avail. By day the British Robots moved to search into this air.

On the third night two robots were made by the British. Two parties of four each descended on the city, and four each were killed, but fortunately the captured, one got five of the British, killed them to smotherness. What they had come for, and what happened in the cities these Robots was a mystery. The captured ones had followed them, but the British had simply walked into the River that flowed through the city—and disappeared!

The following day the river was searched and dragged again, but no solution was found.

## The Battle of the Mechanical Men

There, on the fifth day, the ray machine and one hundred Robot Spiders were ready.

No further assistance had been made by the Rebel Robots, and all the scientists could do was to wait. Then, at the first attack or surprise, the Robot fighters would be let loose.

### ★ THE BATTLE OF THE ROBOTS

YOUNG Peter Kester and his wife, Elizabeth, John Hughes, went to bed dog-tired as that first night, when the work of building the ray machine was complete. All was now set to put the energizing rays into the Robots, and the scientists could sleep a little more peacefully on mind.

When the little electric clock in the scientists' quarters next door to the power house chimed the hour of two Peter was sleeping soundly. A pale shaft of moonlight was glinting through the darkness in which both he and John slept.

Then, for a brief moment that shaft was blotted out. A dark something was out, leaping against the night sky, then the window shattered in fragments.

Next moment a great steel arm, at least six feet in length and snapping with water, came gripping through the shattered window. Its clawlike fingers closed over the sleeping figure of Peter Kester, and lifted him bodily out of the bed.

Peter jerked to terrified wakefulness, to find himself passing through the room in mid-air at the end of a giant arm. Those terror-clad the scream that rose to his throat.

John awoke by the snapping of the window, leapt out of bed and stood petrified as he watched the giant disappear through the window in the grip of that terrible something.

Then he leapt to the window and gaped aloud as he saw a giant Robot—at least twenty feet in height—walking down the street with the helpless body of Peter Kester pinned under one great arm.

Passing only to drag on coat and shoes, John dashed out of the room, and across to the power house.

It was a blur of lights, and gleaming sunbeams snared their bulk into the heights of the dome above. A great low-hanging globe was poised in the centre of the dome, ready to send out its energizing rays.

The night shaft was still whirling, putting up vibrational strings, but John took no notice of them. He dashed across to the gleaming control room, leaped over two iron men, whirled the wheel, and then closed another circuit.

The machines roared to life. The great lights began to revolve, slowly at first, then with a burst as it went whirling round, gleaming in the bright lights of the power-house.

Slowly, the silent Robots, having changed about the power house, got in their feet, and like some strange, silent army stalked towards the close of the power house.

From outside, a sight of this new terror would be enough. The only two John had seen was that Pete might be injured in the battle that was to come.

The Robots roared the road, and John, leading the way, leaped with relief as he saw the giant metal figures in the distance.

The Robots had sighted him too. John was sure of that, and he knew very fast that the chase was on.

For three miles the red army followed that lonely figure, and as they marched along the significance of Wright's setting came to John.

The man who controlled the Rebel Robots—if man it was—would know of the robbery of the power house. The papers were a sounding the story. Probably the two parties of Robots sent out the other night had come to destroy the place. They had failed, and now this new giant, a terror among

Robots, had captured Peter—perhaps as a hostage.

Then John realized they were nearing the town; the fresh sound of the water came to him.

Next moment they were on it, and to the great scientist's amazement and horror he saw the giant Robot take the flight of stone steps in two strides. He dashed forward, and was just in time to see the steel man walk right into the water. He grazed on, he leaped himself down the stone steps.

Now the giant Robot was leaping through the mud and water alongside the embankment, and the Red Robots were coming down the steps. John passed once more at the edge of the water.

The Red Robots were about as high when he jumped down as the ray rods were, followed the giant through the mud in this ghastly nightmare of a journey.

Then the Robot disappeared. John was watching him, his eyes on him all the time, but he simply vanished as if the water had swallowed him up.

The scientist dashed to the spot where he had last seen the giant steel creature and there, as he stood swaying uncertainly in the mud, another Robot, one of the smaller Robots, buried himself out of the water. Then another, and another, until there were at least ten.

Terror stricken, John crawled against the wall.

Then, before the steel men could even notice, the Red Robots leaped themselves on the Robot. Steel clashed, water flying up into a fury, mechanical ironclad man shouting into the water as, locked in deadly embrace, they fought one another.

It was the strangest battle that had ever taken place in the history of the world, and as he watched John was strangely curious.

The water boiled to a fury, and cleaved a path of steel, race parts of mechanical men, water flying in all directions.

But John soon lost interest in the fight as he saw more Red Robots rise up out of the water. Somewhere down there, in solid iron, still, the giant ironclad had taken his pal Peter, and he had yet to fall.

Taking a deep breath, he plunged into the water, water from which he had seen the last of the Red Robots rise.

### ★ UNDERGROUND POWER-HOUSE

HE went down into the circular plaza of light in the side of the embankment, and stopped for it. Even as he went lumbering through the circular opening he knew he had solved the mystery. It was the opening from a secret, and long forgotten, the cause of the other side, for about one level of the water and found himself in a great circular secret hole. It was artificially lighted by electricity, and was evidently the entrance to an underground stronghold of the Rebel Robots. He heard the thrums of machinery.

Not a hasty carelessly he made his way along the ever-vibrating planks, walked through the stone until he reached another hole opening out of the main sewer.

He took the stairs, and knew he was right when the thrum of power increased, when he came out into a great arched vault gleaming with machinery.

His eyes took in the scene as one brief glance. The great machine, the huge globe in the top of the vault—just like their own power-house—the great steel gallery running all round the top of the—

Then John saw the Robot who carried Peter. He was lumbering along that great steel gallery, along to where a strange old man stood waiting at a door leading from the gallery.

Even as John saw the figure he knew that the strange old fellow had seen him, too. He was short, with long grey hair hanging down each side of a heavily furrowed face, and he wore a sort of mask that almost touched the ground.

"Once I was!" John could hear the dull, melancholy voice of the old man even from where he stood.

In something like a panic John took a quick automaton from his pocket and pointed it at the old man.

"Stop that Robot!" yelled John, and he saw the old man display yellow fangs as he started down the stairs.

"Shut! Shut!" he screamed, and his voice was that of a madman. "Shut, and I shall cry," "Destroy! Destroy!"

At the head where the great Robot halted sleepily on his way along the steel gallery, and passed slowly.

In that brief moment John had a terrible thought. The word "Destroy!" The Robot Robot would probably take it as a command.

With terror in his heart he dashed across the stone floor of the vault towards the gleaming control panel.

Even as he moved he saw the newest Robot move the helpless figure of Peter high into the air ready to hurl it down on to the thundering machinery below.

He was, too, the strange old man closing in on the Robot, crying, "Destroy! Destroy!"

Then he had reached the control panel, pulled back the lever, sang the switches.

Breathless with terror John saw the figure of his friend drop from the hands of the Robot, though for one terrible moment it would crash down on to the stone floor below, then heaved again as he saw Peter catch on to the steel rail, hang there.

But the great spinning discs had not stopped yet and there was still some power left in the hand of the Robot. That great iron arm rose again, ready to destroy the first thing with which it came in contact.

The strange old man saw that first thing. The great steel hand caught at the half-lifted arm as though he were a child and pulled him down into the heart of the gleaming machinery below.

The Robot, devoid of all power now, crawled like an animal.

John dashed for the steps leading to the gallery and sang himself up. John in time he dragged the fast falling Peter to the safety of the steel gallery.

They found their way out through the cellar of the old house above them.

\* \* \* \* \*

The mystery of the old man who had controlled the Rebel Robots was solved when the police went through the papers and diaries in the old house above the steel vault, and found the moving formula in a great steel safe.

He had been Max Channell's right-hand man many years before, when Channell was working on the creation of mechanical men. They had quarreled and parted just when they found success, and each had gone his own way.

But the mind of the old fellow in the underground power house had cracked, and, possessed with jealousy when Channell's Robots were set to work in the city, he had planned a control that would make all the Robot machines obey. He had built his great power plant under his own house, leading out of the sewer, and when Channell created the Robot with a mind of his own the other set out to control it. He succeeded, and created the power of the Rebel Robots.

During the month after the capture of Gamma No. 1 he had begun to construct other Robots of a similar design, setting them to work to create themselves an army, completed.

Finally, as a hedgehog for himself, he had built the giant Robot, and this he had sent out to get the young scientist.

"The man who creates a thing to destroy will, in the end, meet his own destruction from it," was John Hughes' verdict, and both he and Peter Kester are now working where old Max Channell left off—to create a race of intelligent mechanical men for the service of mankind.

# Here's a SCOOP

*Modern Marvels, Scientific Wonders, and all the great new Inventions of this Amazing World*

## THE PAPER FOR ALL.

TO a newspaper man, everything that is different, out of the ordinary, something others haven't got, is a scoop.

Here, then, is a paper full of good science and scoop. They are scoop, because they are different, because they look ahead with the vision of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, whose fiction shows us science and science, declared impossible at the time of publication, are not fact.

**SCOOPS** is a paper for all. It has the thrill of adventure and mystery and will transport its readers from the everyday happenings into the future, with all its expectation of development and discovery.

As a story paper, **SCOOPS** stands in a class of its own. It arrives at a time when all the world is wondering what the next few and amazing discovery will be. In its stories **SCOOPS** will endeavor to anticipate the marvels of the age in which we live.

This will justify its claim as the "new paper of to-morrow."

## THE AGE OF WONDER

**WE** are living in a wonderful age—perhaps the most amazing in the whole history of the world.

The thirty short years of the twentieth century have seen more progress than any similar period since the dawn of civilization.

Men no more than forty years old have seen the coming of the aeroplane, the motorcar, electric trains and lines, and great industrial bases—resources which have a result in the transport of the world and human man's whole view of man and nature.

Today, Australia is within a week's journey of the Northland, and the opening of the mighty Atlantic & ocean highway is but a short six hours.

These young men have watched the march of communication by means of the telephone and wireless, so that now, in these present days a man may pick up his telephone and speak to a friend living in another country.

In Australia, or at his own home and in a hotel picking up an hotel 3,000 miles across the sea in America.

In their forty years on earth they have seen the rise of Great Britain transformed. Great buildings have enormous facades, with masses of modern machinery, super-boats and huge blocks of wonder houses. Powerful express trains at speeds of more than a mile a minute, cross 20,000 miles of railway lines. Four thousand miles of cables, carried by tall pylons, bring electric power to the farms and villages, the cities and towns.

For their comfort they have been given electric light in their houses, electric and gas fire, and a hundred and one fascinating devices. For their entertainment they have been presented with the cinema, with its talkies and coloured moving pictures, the gramophone, motor racing and the speedway, the world's greatest singers and the most famous orchestras by their own friends.

They have seen life-saving antidotes, perhaps by the waters of the age—the X-ray and ultra-violet-rays, and the marvelous inventions and discoveries of modern medicine and surgery.

This is, indeed, the age of wonders, and those of who will live for another forty years may see wonders performed that would make the hair of even the past imaginative writers of to day stand on end.

## ROBOTS FOR \$40

**THE** \$40.00 "to-morrow fact."

No more than a week after one of the sun stories of this issue, "The Robot Robots," had been written, came news from our scientific correspondent in New York that an attempt to construct a mechanical man who can think as well as to be as ugly by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The "Brain" of the new robot is an accomplished fact. It has been invented by Norman B. Krim, a New York engineer, and he claims that it will give the robot thinking powers similar to those of a human being.

In the robot that is to be constructed a motor and chest will represent the nervous system of the human body, and it will respond to the stimulus of electric by means of an electric eye, or photo-electric cell. A secondary motor, representing the salver gland, will be controlled by sound action on an electric ear.

The main amazing feature of the new invention is Mr. Krim's assertion that one of these mechanical men can be built at a cost of no more than \$40.

With an unlimited supply of cheap mechanical labor such as this the new invention would make possible, either very much like the one outlined in the story "The Robot Robots," that half-a-billion dollars invested in fast robots.

## OUR FREE GIFT

**P**LEASERS are always fascinating, and I hope you are going to get lots of amusement from *Science Circularized Fresh*, which we present to you as a "Free Gift" this week. When you have finished it, return it and we will send you an essay for the *SCOOPS* on page 19. There are some unique gifts waiting for you.

We are anxious to give you just the things you really enjoy in a pocket paper, and for that reason we would be glad to have from you:

What do you think of *Science*? We would value your frank opinion.

## PROFESSOR A. M. LOW

## TO WRITE FOR "SCOOPS"

**M**AX is always looking round for fresh material to engage

Since the day when Columbus set out on the Seven Seas to prove that the world was round and found instead the "New World," man has gone from thought to thought, until to-day few things are left on earth for man to discover or explore. Only Everest remains impregnable, and even that may have been conquered if the gallant Irvine and Mallory reached the summit before they went to their death.

Man is therefore looking beyond the earth and overhanging cat-arras space is his goal for something new to conquer.

The seventeen of the U.S.A. have gone 21.5 miles up into the stratosphere, and already many expeditions are being planned to go higher still.

Who knows what may be found in the strange unexplored regions of space beyond the atmosphere about our globe?

No one knows, but many can imagine and prophesy, and because we may be the first to present to you the story of this thrilling new world, we have asked one of the world's most famous scientists, Professor A. M. Low, to write

for **SCOOPS** a serial of magazine articles, alternative to the stratosphere.

Professor Low's great story "Space" begins in **SCOOPS** next week.

# SCOOPS

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# of DOOM

engineering master, but every one of them had been annihilated by Brant's own hands under the scientist's expert supervision.

And now the gleaming man had poised on his sleek, whirling branching platform, apparently poised for his mighty leap into space. As a matter of fact, it was not an angle of exactly forty-five degrees, with its stream-lined nose accurately aimed at the gleaming road to a dark, deathly destination.

"Here!" commanded Brant. "There's nothing to hinder us sliding back the roof, opening right now, and starting off straight away. Bang goes should be heard."

"Not just yet," he replied. "We can't afford to leave anything to chance. You're using your every single trick, and I'm looking over every possible angle for the final suggestion we made in the gravity transmitter."

"With a gosh-darn!" O. R. gasped. "Brant had already disengaged made the metal arms of it in the gleaming man body of the Rocket, when the thrash of an aero-plane flying over his earried pulled the scientist up with a jerk."

"The road?" he inquired in astonishment. "Trying to make a landing in the fog? He'll be smashing everything up if he—"

The Professor's first idea was that the plane probably contained some enterprising newspaper man bent on being first on the spot to secure an exclusive interview.

Then with this as an excuse, a quick, or top of the workshop might upset all his plans, "I'll back the door and make into the branching and, eventually, having him arrested. It seemed he was only too late to assist him. There came the splintering crash of a friend landing, which some time can be his left. Parting, relaxed, however, this had at least avoided the workshop. He could hardly though the fog towards the vicinity of the scientist.

Meanwhile Brant was scurrying as fast as he could out of the Rocket and down off the branching platform.

"Where are you going?" he yelled into the fog. He was answered by a startled cry that seemed to cut off very suddenly. Then came more across the fog-shrouded glass of fast approaching headlights, and a volley of wet, cold shots.

Brant had no time to get his startled son together. He was suddenly booted back into the workshop by the impact of three coldly ringing bullets.

He sat up, rapidly rubbing his head in find himself gaping into the mouth of a gun-wielder. The figure behind the pistol was dressed in casual garb, only partially covered by a light raincoat. The face above it was thin-lined and utterly ruthless.

"Back Brando!" growled Brant.

"You know me?" That's fair," snapped the ruffian. "It seems we were telling you that if you don't do just what I say you'll be buried all in quick, you'll never know what's hit you!"

of the top of Rocket he had been impaled on a decorative pine bough, and suspended to 300 feet, "practically" non-existent. And now he had made an equally spectacular snap from the glass pane on the nose.

Brant's eyes turned to the cockpit two passengers. They were Brando's two henchmen in action, Stan Kelly and Tom, a gas chum. They had engineered the outside call of the emergency. Kelly was in the flying kit of an air-pilot.

The plane had been to fly Brando closer to a landing on the Continent. But a thunderously sharp shot in the plane's propeller had caused the friend landing which Professor Brantwise had pushed out to investigate. The crash had also attracted to the spot a strong crew of armed bandits scouring the area for a powerful car.

"Here they come, boys!" snarled Kelly.

"Give 'em a burst, Tom!"

Instantly gas chum didn't need any second telling. He had lugged his friend's side machine gun from the wreckage plane. With a wolfish grin he thrust the nozzle between the sheet sliding doors of the workshop.

*Brando's shot.* A deadly, whirling bullet

spared death and confusion reigned the fog outside. With ease of alarm the gleaming workers scattered wildly in scatter.

*Brando's shot.* Gun, sprayed another bullet to spend their going; then he and Kelly closed the doors to gather and secured them.

"Good work, Tom!" approved Brando, who still kept his gun on the shattered glass. "I guess that's given 'em something to think about!"

"Here we are, Chief. But they're a—"

Brando gave a hoarse chuckle.

"Mark them well, boys, but we won't go after 'em. I guess we've cured anys that one of them fool-pox gnats already, and

it's the rage for us now if we're captured in any case. No matter what we do, we can't be any worse off."

"Say, what's it?" demanded Stan Kelly suddenly.

"What?" Tom, mystified.

For the first time he had found a breathing-space to take in the gleaming weirdness of the place.

"Get 'em," growled the vicious little machine gunner. "I'll have 'em the more tangled they make us, and another about in the process this winter."

Brando was instantly all attention.

"Firing machine?" he snapped, jerking his hand automatically.

"Yeah, Tom. Go on! Grenades or something. Fifty each straight up on the auto-throt that things!"

"A snarling "Yeah!" bellowed the child crook, a gleam of desperate hope coming into his wide eyes. It was evident that he had heard about similar encounters on the same lines. Stan Kelly, his human tentacles fully aroused, had already disengaged tools the gleaming body of the machine. He responded in the metal clanging.

"Cheat," snarled a ring of the controls, "Cheat—"

Cheat! The belligerent workers outside the workshop hadn't been ill in the meanwhile. They were up, making a gallant attempt to force in the doors with a fire-bucket battering ram. Gatti, strong man with a went, his deadly machete at the ready. But Brando waved him aside.

"Come on, boys!" he yelled. "We've nothing to lose, and we're gonna take a chance!" Up on the platform and ready! You too!" He snarled, digging his automatic into Brant's ribs. "You're gonna show us how to work it!"

And despite Brant's time-bomb protests that he was only a passenger and does not meddle about with the Rocket in the absence of Professor Brantwise. He was handled with the greatest care the body of the scientist.

Cheat! The stout workshop doors sagged inward under another terrific impact of the battering-ram.

"Get 'em! And do you, too!" snarled Brando.



The tentacles came slithering through the outlet valve, and the gangster screamed his horrore as he curled round his body, lifting him clean off his feet.

## ★ THE ROCKET SMASHES OUT

**R**AKET BRANALDO! Brant didn't care for instant recognition in any place but personal acquaintance with the professor. A few moments before, the redhanded, thin-lipped face had been pictured in every newspaper in the country. His full name was, however, Stan Brando. He had come originally from America to give Brando's name more clout up there.

He had made the fatal mistake, however, of creating So-called Yard Dog highly. The last few hours had been a back east at the last

## Stolen Rocket Thunders Into Space

"I don't know a thing about it," said Brant in a desperate attempt to walk long enough for the warden to force their way in. "And it would be useless."

“Look! The time has come when we can clean off their goons and the pinkish attackers come running to defend them. At the same moment film Rolly took a desperate chance. He leaped forward in the gleaming meteors and landed down a fair which looked something like a paradise central.

Instantly there came a tremendous, whirling roar from the tail of the Rocket. The windows were rattled and tossed about like drift in the cyclone back-breaker. Then up it shot, noiselessly as an arrow from a well-drawn bow, to clatter its way clear through the glass-tinted roof of the work shop.

And then, to those below, there was only the fading echo of its whirling roar as it headed its way upwards through the swirling banks of fog!

### ★ A THOUSAND MILES UP! ★

**R**ENALDO was jubilant. "We're headed 'em, and this 'em fast!" he shouted, valiantly trying to peer downward through the speeding Rocket's thick glass ports.

Contrary to expectation, there had been practically no speed or jar inside the machine from its tremendous take-off. The flow of the escape chamber was carefully adjusted on hydrodynamic buffers to ensure least jar at any flying angle from horizontal to forty-five degrees. It was at the latter angle that all strengthened pipes were now shearing into space.

"The film star," chattered the gas-leader apprehensively. "I reckon you'll soon be able to level off and go wherever we want to."

"Gosh, you well can," grappled Brant, whose standard vita were rapidly increasing from

the first identified effect of their unexpected take-off. "The Rocket can only fly at an extremely low angle under its own power."

The gas-leader stared at him right.

"D'you mean it can't carry itself on climbing?" "Just right it is, the means."

"For exactly one hour. And twenty feet upwards from the take-off."

"And then what?"

Brant shrugged his shoulder.

"I'm not saying, because I don't exactly know. But I warn you, if anybody but me starts mucking with the controls, we'll hit the earth so hard that it'll be quicker to dig us out from Australia."

"Why the big base and pretty fast minutes between?" challenged Rolly.

Brant shrugged his shoulders again.

"As we're all at the same limit," he remarked coolly, "I suppose I ought to say this things to you. But I'd better not about turning on the oxygen first or we'll all be suffocated."

Brant gripped him by the front of his mechanic's overall.

"Say, bone," snarled the gas-leader viciously, "what are you trying to put over on us?"

His close-set eyes flickered to as姊妹 on the gleaming instrument board. It was marked in bold figures from one to ten. The indicator was creeping up to the two mark.

"You're not gonna blab me that we've wasted oxygen at less than two thousand feet?"

Brant looked at him with a flitting grin.

"No, I'm not going to tell you that," said the scientific mechanic quietly. "But we're near it at the altitude we've just reached. That particular observer is calibrated to units of one hundred miles."

Brant's jaw popped.

"Say, you're not gonna blab me that we're up that high?" he snarled. "I know my engines, and I just don't consider."

Brando thought it was time to come into the picture. He sprung up his seat ready automatic.

"Up nearly two hundred miles," he grunted derisively. "You can't get what seats twice to throw a single iota on with star like that. Come right off it, or you'll get the marks, people."

"All right," grappled Rolly. "Have it your own way."

They pulled at their seatbelts and then the wadarius Brant got her head up to his mouth.

"Gosh, bone," he gulped, "another in pretty kind shape!"

"Hush it," said Brant brightly. "We're now flying on the air we brought up in the Rocket practically miles we started, and it's beginning to get dark. And it's no good opening a port for a fresh supply. There's no air outside now. We're breaking up at a steady speed of nearly seventeen miles a minute, and we're well beyond the limit of the earth's breathable atmosphere."

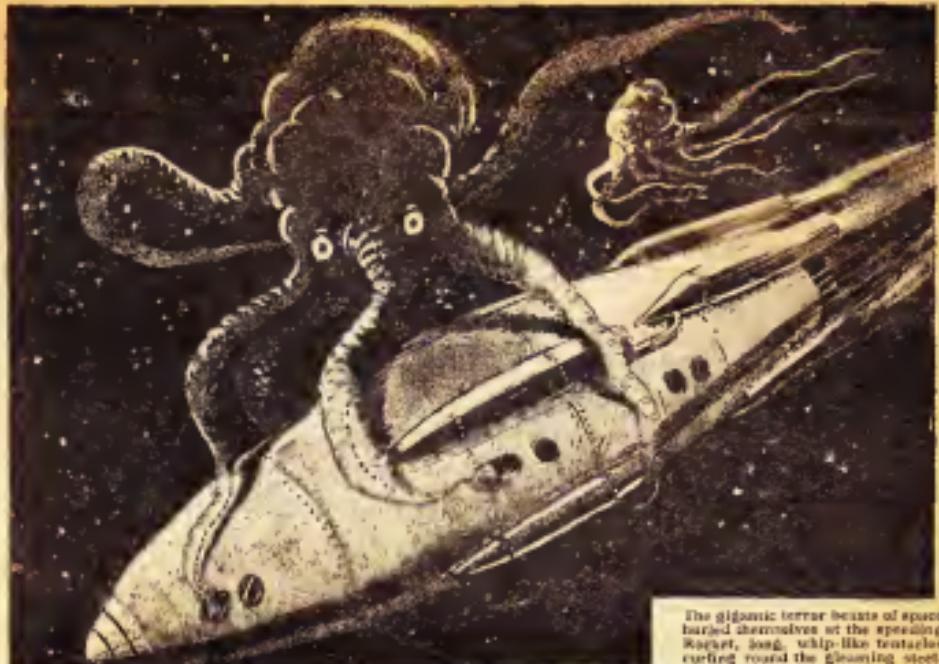
"Breakout makes a minute," grappled Brando, tooting slightly green.

"That's near enough on a basis of a thousand miles an hour," grappled Brant.

"You can work out the exact figure for yourself if you like."

There was something in Brant's cool manner of speaking that earned conviction. In addition the increasing darkness of the world up are hands the flying chamber spontaneously for itself! Without a word, the credits staggered in the glass star ports of the Rocket set over the flying chamber.

Except for a faint roar of exploded gun-thin was practically nothing to be seen. It was obvious, however, that they were rocketing upwards at an enormous rate. And beyond the ports the telltelling rook-like clouds of sheer space expanded. Also especially that they had indeed penetrated deep into the mysterious realms up to beyond the stratosphere. In addition, far, far below, they caught the mere suggestion of a world, towering up, like cotton-wool—the upper surface of the clouds which enveloped the earth. (The story is continued at foot of next page.)



The gigantic terror beasts of space harried themselves at the speeding Rocket, long, whip-like tentacles curling round the gleaming steel.



## Holed by a Terror Beast of Space

### ★ DROWNED IN THE AIR

ZERO hour, or within minutes, was fast receding to the Rocket, still hurtling steadily upwards through featureless space.

The dramatic take-off had happened at exactly 30:36 a.m. on the circumnavigator, and now the crew had won on the wings of 82 miles, one hour and twenty-four minutes later. That, as Brant had explained, was the calculated time necessary to traverse the 2,400 miles of 1,000 miles per hour up the long side of a huge right-angled triangle inscribed in a perpendicular height of 1,000 miles above the earth's surface.

"The power circuits are due to peter out at any second now," muttered Brant uneasily. His eyes were glued on the chronometer and altimeter. The latter had hovered at the 1,000-mile mark in accordance with Professor Barnaby's calculations.

The Rocket's unlettered passengers crowded excitedly round the mechanism as he rounded over the instrument board.

"Now!" he brushed. At the same instant the eight detonations set off by the exploding bombs inside the Rocket's hemispherical, bullet-shaped steel disc ring. The surrounded nose section exploded and the hydraulic bellows flung the flying chariot rising up level in sympathy.

Brant joined a small lever over to the left. A shower of sharply-arrested meteors seemed to pass through every gleaming plate of the rocket's faience. For a split second it seemed to hover motionless on a level line. And then it was rocketing onwards through space at a slightly-diminished speed.

"It's cracked!" cried Brant suddenly. "What's cracked?" gasped Barnaby helpfully.

"The gravity regulator! The repelling rays have cut out the earth's downward pull sufficiently to hold us where we are."

"But we're still travelling!"

"Yes, but horizontally. We're in the position of a boy swinging a stone on the end of a string. The world is the boy, the disillusioned gravity pull is the thousand miles string, and we're the stone on the end of it."

"You mean we're *crashed* round an round the earth?"

"Not exactly that. We're rocketing round and round with the earth revolving on its axis. The speed of the earth's revolution at the equator is approximately a thousand miles per hour. Our present position in relation to the earth's surface on the north of the equator doesn't quite make up for that, even with the help of one thousand miles gravity slowing, so our speed is slightly less."

"That's me!" gasped the gangster, his man shaking his hand.

"What I want to know," snarled Brant,

"is how we're gonna get down."

That's just what the god-damn wasn't quite sure about," said Brant quietly. "If we can't use the aerostats and start slowing down at a calculable velocity of thirty-five feet per second—at the end of a minute nearly two thousand feet per second—what's a question if we could pull the Rocket up again. And I'm not going to risk hitting the earth with a walloping like that so long as our oxygen supply lasts—for about twenty-four hours."

"Oh, you are?" sneered the oxygen tank gangster, waving his sabre. "You're gonna pull it right now. If we try up here my longer I'll go mad!"

Things looked very ugly for Brant, who was firmly determined to stick to his point, when a hoarse, strangled cry of mortal terror came from Tommy gas Gatti.

There was reason for his terror. When the others swung round to follow the direction of the glistening gangster's quivering figure, they saw a vision of horror that was never imagined in an earthly nightmare.

An ungodly horrible and huge pair of

bulbous eyes peered unceasingly through the glass plates at the sides of the Rocket. They were attached to a huge, bloated body almost completely transparent and apparently of the same jelly-like texture as the sea anemone. Long, whip-like tentacles, like those of a great octopus, radiated from the central mass and enabled the monster to hold its position on the spending space ship.

And it wasn't the only one. There were scores more of the terrible creatures surrounding the Rocket on every side. They seemed to be able to keep pace with the Rocket, with effortless ease. In "Eight" they bloated, transparent bodies seemed to flatten out, parabolic bodies to walk and slide that along through space at will.

The ungodly mass of the unceasing eyes beyond the glass shattered Brant's nerve completely. With a wild, hysterical laugh he jerked up his automatic, finger on the trigger, and aimed at the eyes. Just in time Brant dodged the weapon from his hand.

"Fool!" shouted the mechanic. "Put a bullet through that glass and we'll lose our oxygen and suffocate, whatever happens!"

The gangsters crowded down, hiding their faces in glistening terror as more and more of the terrible creatures advanced themselves to the gleaming Rocket.

"We're doomed now!" shrieked Tommy gas Gatti.

And, trying to tell Brant what he was up to, he tried to restrain him. Staring in alarm, the mechanics could hear the ungodly slithering their tentacles all over the Rocket's outer shell. Evidently they were trying to find some way to crack the pressure vat which had dried into thin skin.

And then Brant's eyes nearly popped from his head. A tell-tale hiss escaped him that at least one cockpit had found a gash in the Rocket's armor. It had forced its way through one of the oxygenation outlet valves. It came faltering and spouting downwards while the pressure, like going oxygen leaked through the partially opened valve which spewed.

"Look out!" screamed Brant. But the towering, terror-streaked gangsters were beyond hearing him. Like lightning the loathsome, transparent tentacles whipped round Brant's body and began to lift him upwards.

To add to his horror, Brant began to choke for the lack of air fast-rising oxygen. And then into his dressing bags came the memory of two emergency "life-belts" which the scientist had stored in the Rocket. These consisted of portable oxygen tanks and anoxia masks.

His groping fingers found one and adjusted the mask over his face. And then, more by instinct than anything, he young man jerked the gravity regulator back to neutral.

Instantly the Rocket plunged northwards at ever increasing speed. Affected by the tremendous sweep through space, the blood sang in Brant's bruised bones. He staggered dizzily and nearly lost his balance. He tried to save his legs to keep the regulator set. Gradually, however, his equilibrium on the flimsy oxygen found its way into his blood.

He clung to the lever back, gulped with relief as he found the downward sweep arrested and held, and then swung round, wide-eyed to see what was happening behind him.

He groped with unaccustomed behind his mask. To sides his spearhead and grappling iron at the floor of the flying chariot. The scientist's pants were still coiled around him, but it appeared to be loose and dead. The other two gangsters were also sprawled senseless through lack of air.

Brathes criminals thought they were, Brant's first thought was for them. Snatching out his knife he dashed at the dangling tentacles in order to clear the fuel tanks from above. The long blade sliced through the tough, jelly-like substance, and the short and promptly plattered away through the valve to burst a gash.

At first Brant could not understand this. Was the monster still alive after all? And then, through the red lights, he plainly saw the bloated body shooting straight upwards. And he was satisfied that it was quite dead. At the same time he realized that all the other monsters had disappeared from the Rocket's shell.

"The one-up certainly got rid of them," he boasted. "And I do believe the cat that couldn't get clear because of its trapped mouth was devoured!" His theory was that the monsters could only live in some rarefied element—space, and that to drag them down into anything approaching the earth's atmosphere was equivalent to drowning a man in water!

But there was no time to think any more about this at the moment. The automatic closing of the oxygenation valve was now allowing sufficient oxygen to accumulate in the flying chariot to support life.

Brant took off his mask and examined the half-suffocated gangster. He was satisfied himself that they would pull round all right.

"But before they do so," he muttered, "I'm taking charge of their gas. From now on I'm going to control this outfit."

Seas eighteen hours later the appearance of a wild red flare in the early morning sky caused great excitement among a group huddled on the edge of a wide tract of open country in Poland.

"There he is!" cried an excited voice. The nervous watchers immediately piled into a powerful car to rush to the spot where the flare had come down. Here the car's powerful headlights were swinging upwards to act as blinding guides.

And very soon the silver outline of the Rocket was discovered, dangling in a series of smooth, spiraling stages as Brant carefully operated the gravity regulator. And as fast as it moved lightly as a feather on the rough mountain surface.

The first person to greet Brant as he stepped out on to the bare ground was Professor Barnaby.

"Hello, guy-sen," greeted Brant. "I thought you'd be here to meet me. That's why I was here to stay up long enough to give you time to get here by ordinary plane."

"Everything go off all right?" beamed the scientist.

"Like a charm. Nothing is blinder to flying to the moon if we want to. Only thing we didn't count on was a lot of a mixture of wild game hunting and desperate fishing in space—but you'll hear all about that later."

"And the criminals?"

"No need to worry about them, per' son," grinned Brant. "I've got 'em all trussed up ready ready ready for anybody who wants to collect 'em!"

"But," said a jubilant reporter who had thought it worth while to follow the "Mad Professor" from England, "how on earth do you know that the Rocket would ever show up here in Poland of all places?"

"Nothing at all to that," said the scientist patently. "The Rocket was bound to come down approximately 900 miles due east of its starting point. It was set due east to begin with and 900 miles would round the base of the eight-sided triangle of the flight—3,400 miles up at an angle of forty-five degrees, and a vertical drop of 1,000 miles 900 miles to the eastward. It was perfectly simple to settle it out on a map of Europe and not nearly so wonderful as the amazement forewarning of the appearance of a comet!"

"It beats me, anyway," gasped the reporter. "But oh, boy, what a story!"

A world-famous scientist, called at the present moment, captures the transmogrified space pirates and organizes a raid of the Unmanned Front. His friend, the able, the scientist, has a remarkable account of the flight of the terrible Rocket that results in the great story, "Lead of Space," is next week's issue.

# The MYSTERY of the BLUE MIST

There it was again—that Mysterious Blue Mist with its terrible leering eyes

## ★ EYES WITHOUT MAN

THE Survey Party reached up Fleet Street and into the Strand. A single blue case from his left hand he crossed the pavement at Wellington Street.

At a steady, citizen's gait, we hear it pass along the deserted street, and, from across the short office premises and behind Big Ben, made their board above the drivers of the cabs. Two o'clock—and the driver made a mental note that he'd reach Basingstoke by seven.

That was the last coherent thought of the driver, still to be continued in consciousness in a void at Charter Cross Hospital two days later. Peering through the glass of his incubator, he saw a pair of eyes—blue eyes, as keen and a couple of yards ahead. But no gleaming eyes at a man's height from the ground. A pair of eyes that stared at him and shrank away; eyes without a head—or a body. Two gleaming, pale—blue eyes, gleaming at him from out of a blueish mist.

He turned the wheel of the lorry in random panic. The silence of early morning was shattered by the high, shrill screech of the pavements and shivered along them. The lorry slipped over it at a angle as the rear wheel bogged through the top of "bancum" lighting them, until the crack of the window-glass and the thud of the engine as the driver's foot smacked on the accelerator pedal, the lorry came to a standstill.

Police Constable Gullane, who had patrolled the Strand from Bedford Street, was on his way to a nearby pub. In reporting to his superiors he mentioned that it was apparent that the driver had drowsed at the wheel. The thoughts had been dictated at the time, but, before being consciousness, the driver had rapidly recurred. "These eyes! Eyes!" Told "the constable?"

On arrival in hospital, however, it was found that the man was suffering from a facies of the mind. "To all intents and purposes it was merely another accident caused by a driver of a heavy transport vehicle succumbing to the effects of long hours at the wheel."

But one was very different—he who called himself "Eyes Without Man." He who—screamed and cowering—hid about his world beneath the wheels of the approaching

long lorry. Only the driver had seen all there was to see of him—his eyes. And eyes at P.C. Gullane and a local optician were lifting the screaming driver from his cabin. Eyes Without Man was burrowing through those nerves, back-streets that surround Covent Garden Market.

Nobody saw him—nobody could see him. Just a pair of eyes that glided along in the shadow of the buildings. Eyes that were suddenly enkindled in a blue glow as they passed the omnibus wiper lamps. Until they passed at an unmercifully slow door in Victoria Street. A key appeared at a height of about three feet from the pavement, rose slowly and inserted itself in the lock. Then it turned, and the door swung open.

Eyes Without Man entered, closed the door behind him, and removed the stones and weapons stored in the second floor. Again the key slipped out of the lock and opened another door, and Eyes Without Man—known to the constable of the previous night—"Mr. Austin" for now a name as you'd mark any day!—sat down.

The single electric light switched on, was casting a dimly furnished room with either bed, a small table, books and a work bench—and a box full of colourless blue mist from which glowed a pair of eyes. Then the road led, as Eyes Without Man goes place to Hong Austin. A horrific spectacle that terrorised—just the blue mist, fading and growing pale in a hand. A lead floating six feet above the ground. And then, growing down from beneath the skin, the neck, the breast—yes—and two hands. And beneath them—nothing. And then from the track along one leg, and then the other, until the whole of the body was revealed.

A sight that would shake the stoutest nerves—but a sight that no man had ever witnessed. For in that transformation from man to mist was the secret of Hong Austin.

It long took him a hand against the wall. Nobody had seen it, not even Hong Austin. Just a bluish mist against the wall, just the invisible chair—an ordinary greenish box colour that was by Police examination—proven not that, starting from the sides of the floor, was topped by a neck that covered everything save the eyes. Just that—and the secret of his invisibility.

As he prepared for bed, Austin was thinking of many things. Thinking of that day when his experiments with the spectrum had given to him the secret of passing through

## Long Complete Story



chemically treated material that in sunlight would absorb all the colours of the spectrum, that would have no colour to reflect back, and would therefore be invisible. How he had found that artificial light produced slightly different results. How all the blue could not be absorbed, and how—under such conditions—it became a fleshly mist.

He thought of those hours of darkness that followed the extinction of his discovery. Of the power that was now his—that could be used for good or evil. How his thoughts had turned to crime—of robbery, that's a factor for the taking. And how he had dedicated his discovery to the service of the needy. To take from the wealthy . . . to help the underdog.

Eyes Without Man smiled a little bitterly as he thought of that. The joy when he had seen it—joyous. He'd been thinking—he'd been looking, or hearing. Couldn't expect the driver to see him. Then he'd looked up and seen the long lorry down on him; he'd stood transfixed by his fate for a second, and then made a wild leap for the safety of a phone booth. And the lorry had ploughed into the shop-front.

Before closing his eyes in sleep he made a note to call at the hospital and speak through the nurse's chamber. He'd find his address . . . and then he could help.

## ★ FLYING BAGS OF SILVER

THE young man who did duty behind the timbered counter of the West End and Salamanca Music's Antique shop had been thoroughly educated in the methods to be employed in the event of attempted hold up. But his experience of the apparently supernatural was limited.

Austin's second day in the rôle of Eyes Without Man coincided with a lamentable breakdown in the nature of the back door.

The Antique premises did not open as soon as for the day for music and a few minutes when Austin entered. He held one of his curiously gloved hands to his eyes, concealing them from view, yet keeping his gaze fixed between the slightly open invisible fingers.

He looked around, saw that the back was empty of clients, and cast wistfully over his shoulder as the clerk was cracking out some bags of silver.

## A Dick Turpin From Nowhere

He stopped quickly and his fingers closed over two of the bags. They rose vertically from the counter and sailed through the air. Hardly believing his senses, the bank clerk snatched a maddening warning. Automatically his foot struck at the switch on the floor that electrically closed back doors of the bank.

He tried again automatically as he had been trained to act in an emergency. He had been conscious only of the two bags of silver being snatched from the counter. But now, a second later, he realized that something was wrong. Even as he watched the bags sail upwards and out—saw them and deadly vanish as Eyes Without Man slipped them into one of the pockets of his dark—  
the shock-jawed man screamed again. But this time there was no naming name in his voice—only pain, sheer pain.

Austin sprang lightly to the floor again and made for the door. He burst a silent from the manager's office and, half running, he and the other members of the staff racing on. Stalkingly the bank clerk, unconscious agent, had then taken a quivering finger and pointed it at Austin. Austin realized that the man had had no gun.

He hurried to the door and slipped it back, looked around desperately, shading his eyes with his crooked finger. He hurried to the door at the other end of the counter, and realized that he was locked in. He stood in silent silence, listening to the hysterical outpourings of the thief, the manager's voice speaking urgently to the police. He realized that he was cornered and as quickly as possible that they could never catch him alive.

He had a car driven to a shoulder outside, then a hammering on one of the doors. The manager hurried over, and four police men started across as an effort in escape, but the heavy door swung closed in front of him.

The manager was losing a series of questions as the bank manager and the thief. The three gamblers stood by the door.

And then two of the bags just sailed straight upwards in front of my face and vanished. Then, a few seconds later, I saw a pair of eyes staring at me over there, and saw back dark padded at his purloining braw.

The manager looked questioningly at the manager, and the latter spoke sternly: "You're all right. Health's quite good, no worries." And they all started to search for the missing silver.

Eyes Without Man, crouching close to the floor, considered, tired of the waiting. He'd got an urgent appointment elsewhere—an engagement he meant to keep.

A police whistle blare shrilly, and one of the policemen glanced down as a sudden movement to see his whistle dangling from his pocket. A whistle, moreover, that was mounted at the mouthpiece.

"It's just like," he replied to the manager's angry query. "I swear, as it was taken away in my pocket. Then it flew right close to my ear, and here it is still now."

The bank manager looks apathetically. "There's something queer going on here just now, that's for certain. And I'm not all going mad."

The manager's eyes suddenly whirled from his hand and half circled the room before it fell to the floor. For a moment the manager was speechless. He didn't bother to retrieve his cap; he just snatched one of the policemen at the door. "Go outside and keep an eye on those gamblers—show nobody to come in. I shall telephone the station for more men. There's something living in this place—and he's not getting out."

The policeman saluted smartly and opened the door. Then he suddenly staggered forward and pitched on his face. He lay up dazedly and glared around. "Something chased me!" As I opened the door somebody poked into the small of my back. What why did he go?"

He saw the others staring at him as if he were mad. "You mean to say . . . ?" And he pulled up his shirt and went back into solitude.

Eyes Without Man, his invisible lips cringed into a faint smile, limped along the streets in the direction of Battersea. He doesn't load a vehicle for fear of somebody taking on him.

It was almost mid-day by the time he reached the block of tenement houses that was his objective. Yesterday he had overheard the conversation between one James Brown unemployed labourer, and Mr Jacob Bernstein, real estate. And that conversation had prompted Austin to take a corner in the service of the needy.

For Brown was in the grip of unemployment and three months behind with the rent for the two small rooms he lived in. And Bernstein had threatened to turn out the Brown family unless the rent was paid up to date by noon on the morrow.

Eyes Without Man clasped the long flights of stone stairs that led to the Brown door and, shading his eyes, went in. He saw the labourer sitting heavily in an old arm-chair waiting for the arrival of the collector; saw him look up with drooping eyes as the door swung open, and stood his clothes before the table as Brown crossed heavily and closed it closed.

The invisible man waited until the labourer's back was turned before he stealthily emptied the two bags of silver on the platform. He saw Brown looking round at the front door of room now his eyesoggle at the mass of silver that had suddenly appeared.

Then a warning he judged by the Mrs. Brown came in answer to his husband's excited shouts, and Eyes Without Man smiled pleasantly, as he heard them arguing as to whether they should take it to the police. And then they decided that was, undoubtedly, long bound of their duty. And he thrilled as he heard Brown mutter again in a broken voice: "Thank you, sir . . . whatever you are."

He went out into the street and saw that the early editions of the evening papers were proclaiming the story of the bank robbery. He saw a man buy a paper, glance at the sporting columns, and drop it into a waste basket. The invisible man, stealthily lifted it over so that he could read it in all its strength, the story retold. And as he read he saw what he had been fearing. The police were endeavouring to establish the connection between the Lucy road at the early hours of that morning with the mysterious strange occurrences at the Aldgate Bank.

In both cases, the paper pointed out, the victim had worn they had seen a pair of eyes. But here the similarity ended, for it was believed that the Lucy driver had seen turned a blue mist, and no blue mist had been seen at the bank.

Eyes Without Man waited until the street was comparatively deserted, and then turned the pages of the paper until he found the story he wanted: just a few lines announcing that Thomas Patrick, local gal of the reader of a City financier, would be exonerated at Battersea Prison on the morrow.

The invisible man turned and hurried back to his room in Covent Garden, being careful to keep his hand to his eyes. Once, with his bent knees, he collapsed with a gasp, holding back the words of apology that resulted in his lips, he hurried on, limping a middle-aged gentleman to stagger into a corner. A hand clutched his "pocket cap."

A small boy opened out on the banks of the river and Eyes Without Man removed his mask and became Mr. Austin, the rather perfect lodger.

"He'd got to do something about this Pettink now. He told himself as he began to eat.

Pettink had killed a man, but that didn't mean that he should die. Bernstein, the City banker, had been a rat. He'd swindled Patrick out of his life savings.

But contact with that had been responsible for killing his victim of his employment. And Pettink, reduced to poverty, had no solvent that he might as well die at the end of a hangman's rope as on a bench on the Thomas Radclyffe. Pettink had killed Bernstein, and the last and that now Pettink must suffer for his life.

Of course, there had been a public outcry.

Public opinion was in favour of a reprieve.

Yet Austin told himself, in similar circumstances he'd have acted as Pettink had and Boscawen deserved to die—Pettink rich didn't. And Pettink must.

## ★ THE KNIFE FROM NOWHERE

EYES WITHOUT MAN was clinging to the toppling sheet of a curved goods truck. He had decided that, to get a lift on a westbound goods train was the safest and easiest method of his getting to Boscawen. He dragged off at a steady lurch at seven o'clock. With only the stars and a cap of the darkness to guide him he plunged into the insulation and, three hours later, he found himself outside the gates of the prison. For the next two hours he walked about to keep warm until the noise of an approaching motor caused him that the world behind the walls was waking to a new day.

A motor-man drove to a halt outside the main gates, and a small door at the side was opened to admit the bather. A couple of warders stood on duty at the entrance, but Eyes Without Man waited his opportunity and then slipped between them.

The execution was fixed for eight o'clock, and the terrible man lost plenty of time in出来的。 He passed through another gate, climbed a wall and found himself in an enclosed yard. Then, silhouetted against the brightening sky, he saw the finalities of his fate that was to send Pettink to his doom. The invisible man, crooked his a thin waist in the long flight of one of the prison lamps, shuddered a little. He saw then as how Pettink would be led out, and if something happened to the unfeeling—something that could not be explained—then the Press and public opinion would accuse the condemned man's regicide.

Eyes Without Man, crouched at one side of the platform. He saw the stars disappear and that first faint break in the east gradually spread over the sky. Then a bell tolled somewhere, and the invisible man shuddered again as he saw the group approaching from the main building.

Pettink was in the middle, with head hanging on his shoulders, slouching a little. A prison walked on his right, talking earnestly in low tones. And a couple of guards behind were the Governor and two or three warders. Pettink's arms were pinioned and, as he slowly mounted the platform and stood beneath the dangling lamp, one of the warders passed a strap round his legs.

The noose was slipped round his neck, and only the dressing voice of the prison chaplain broke the silence. Eyes Without Man lit a lighter on the platform. He heard a thin break from the condemned man's throat, and the moaning lack enthusiasm between Governor and executioner. And, then as the trap door dropped to lead Pettink to eternity, a knife flashed out of the empty air and severed the rope. Pettink dropped through the trap—in a dead faint.

Four minutes later, swinging outside the wall of the yard, Eyes Without Man saw the long line back to his cell. And he knew that Pettink was dead.

He returned to his room late that night

## Invisible Man cheats the Hangman's Noose

London awoke behind the mysterious fog of yesterday and, snarled to it as best the Press was determined to make it snarl.

Henry Austin went to sleep determined to stay out of his office to help the underdog until the Yard was home.

The old master remained home with breakfast and a copy of the *Daily Mirror*. "Good morning, Mr. Austin. I didn't hear you come in last night—but I must have done it!" she sat on the sofa, the lamp and candle quivered. "But that's what I always do—year after year—always as quiet, always as it is now, for nothing matters to myself."

She had got to the date when she passed—just before reading when that glass pane—just now. Poor Henry Austin, it came to a short and silent human shriek. But it did not read it in the paper.

Austin hardly waited for the door to close behind her to be snatched at the paper. There is water-music all of it. The lamp after, the lamp, driven pale had recovered consciousness during the night, and the sun had at last crept out of Petrifield. The police chief was inclined to believe that Erys Without Man was responsible for the snatching of the pane, but the old man's public profession to look upon it as a lamp accident. And so Petrifield was safe to be bengal.

And then followed an interview with Chief Inspector, Inspector Hitchens, of Scotland Yard. He informed an excited public that his department already had the terrible man under observation and that an early arrest could be expected. And, provided he were doing more defiance by the *Express*'s reporter, he stated that Erys Without Man would be under lock and key within the next twenty-four hours—now or Big Ben failed.

Assuredly so he need not wait, but in the town, Hitchens was looking, of course, for the police. Lucy Hitchens, his daughter, was asked if she could be close to him? They were trying to shoot him with arrows, his hands trying to fight him off. Frightened her off, who had no arrows to do them what would have him.

Here from under lock and key within the next twenty-four hours as sure as now or Big Ben would stand ready. Nothing could be more certain of course. And yet, yet.

Suspecting Big Ben didn't notice that would prove as the hand that these jobs were not such a simple one.

### ★ WHEN BIG BEN STOPPED

Erys WITHOUT MAN was standing in Parliament Square at half past eleven last night. The last of the electric traffic was fast disappearing from the streets, and he was there to see that pair of shaggy-eyed eyes directed on the huge clock face containing a couple of blushing feet above the present?

He climbed over the iron railings to the base of the clock-tower and went round to the side that would admit him to the building. It was closed. He tried other doors, and all were locked. Parliament was not having a late sitting.

He went back to the foot of the dark tower, the shaggy-eyes and unperceived—he started to climb. The curved stairs offered abundant foothold and hand-hold. And as he moved slowly up out of the light of the electric street lights the glass pane that surrounded his gradually faded in that only two eyes and nothing more remained. He passed for breath on a ledge way feet higher, until the swinging of the quarter stopped him to measured effort.

He started again, feeling each preparing piece of masonry before he gave it his full weight. Thus he almost fell at a large church window and watched its fragments in the cold below. He saw a policeman look up, and the policeman was making only the good clock that had given London

so long for the past eighty years, bounding across the sky every fifteen minutes of every hour of every day—for eighty years.

Erys Without Man snatched himself up and sent the prancing ledge to the bottom of the huge glass pane. His fingers found a grip on the iron armature, in the glass. Clinging there, he passed for breath. Then he climbed up the outer sections until he reached the outer spiral. He kept on the general hand and his fingers found a hold, clipping himself across the glass until he could get a grip higher up on the spiral hand, and burst another foot against the hand, and so on. Until he was standing on the outer spiral.

From his hand he withdrew a piece of short steel, and this he wedged between the hands that came closer together with every passing minute. He clung there until the cold paws of the minute hand brought it to a standstill on the wire. And so, at three minutes past midnight, Erys Without Man held for the last time on his hands.

Erys Without Man believed that he had got to get on and get away before the hands started to gather. The Square below. He lowered himself from the big hand and saw his clipping the spiral. From beneath with arms dissolved now—he found he was unable to move the outer sections and his feet slipped away fast from the ledge below.

An iron hand and objective in view called for nerve, but to climb on that narrow ledge, a few hundred feet deep at the cost of any more was impossible. He'd overbalanced, and fall.

The glass was passed as he hung there, until the man was gone and he realized that even

the most resolute would relax their grip and let go.

But there was coming in from inside the clock tower. As the old man rose down below the ancient mechanism of the clock suddenly sensed that something was wrong. He waited for Big Ben to strike—and Big Ben didn't strike. The old man snatched at a hidden hammerous lump that hung from a nail in the wall and, with uttering that, started to click the circular glass stairs that wound their way up the tower.

With the hand held before his face he climbed upwards. He reached the mechanism room behind the great clock face and found it motionless. He was turning to go below to telephone when he thought he heard a knock. He turned, apprehensively. It came again—a knock on the face of the glass! With trembling hand the old man lifted the latch of the small door in the face and slowly opened it. He thrust the hammer—*click*—and saw a blue ghost that crept like tiger tails to side. And yet high up in that wild a pair of eyes.

The leap dropped from the old man's nervous fingers and crashed to the floor and died. The blue mist vanished, but the eyes remained. And, as the invisible man revenged himself through the open door to safety, the old man ceased and ran to safety. Seized for a moment on the bank of the stairs, staggering as Erys Without Man snatched forward as a desperate effort to save him—the keeper of the clock went over and over very slowly and still plunged into the black very depths of the tower and thudded on the outer rocks.

For a moment the invisible was stood resolute, trying to clear his mind of that sickening picture of the tragedy. Then he descended down the stairs, passed for a moment beside the broken ledge, and hurried out into the street.

With his hand covering his eyes he stalked the gathering crowd and hurried down the Embankment. The thought of the old man that had gone to his death still rankled. His bad seed Petrifield and the keeper of the clock to his death. Perhaps, it is bad never crossed the clock.

An abrupt splash in the dark water before him brought him with a leap on the stone balustrade. Twenty feet below he saw a man struggling in the water, being borne away on the flood currents. For a moment a pair of eyes however above the river and then that was all and just as he was about to dive.

Erys Without Man hit the water bodily; plunged deep, into the muddy water and came to the surface breathless. A few yards away from him he saw an upturned iron oak. He swam over to it with rapid strokes and dove again. Dived about in the churning blackness until his fingers gripped sudden steel. Tore at the surface again with the man struggling in his arms. He dashed him twice, thrice, and the man was soon unconscious. Then, letting the tide take him, he drifted down stream, in where now a stone stairs entered the water.

He dredged the man up to the stairs and realized that swimming was happening to him as he glomped the unconscious in the other's arms.

Erys Without Man looked down at himself and realized that the river water was acting on his chemicals on his clock. As he regained his legs he saw them gradually take shape; looking at the man and saw them emerging out of the blackness. With an instant movement he slipped the iron oak from his hand, shook the sudden shock from his body and dropped it quickly into the still-flowing water. He watched it ride away, sailing gradually.

"Lord!" breatheth the down and up. "Tell me I ain't seeing things, mind."

Henry Austin snorted ever so slightly. "Come and have a cup of hot coffee, then I've got to get back to my lodgings. My controller there's for a perfect judge, you know?"



The old man saw those gleaming eyes for one terrible moment—then he turned and ran, screaming his heart out.

# Voice From The Void

A dull murmur of sound, a growing, roaring Babble  
—but above it all a Voice, a mighty VOICE of  
Thunder that spoke From NOWHERE

## ★ THE VOICE SPEAKS

IT was night. The Kurfürstendamm that stretching, broad thoroughfare which is the heart of Berlin's West End, was still with light, clamorous with traffic, singing with people.

In a room high up in a modern skyscraper building, also the Kurfürstendamm, five men round an oval table of pale wood, glistening polished beneath the incandescent lights.

At the head of the table was Brüggemann. Every picture paper in every country has made known throughout the world his great fame with his wide spread of shoulder, his pale and unshaved face, his shaven head, and the ruddy, amiable smile he always wears.

His white and soft right hand layed conveniently with a golden pencil as he leaned back and watched his associates—Gleiwitz, come from Paris to sit; Taggart, living in Brussels but with cord connections of a local agent in Antwerp; van Stegge, who claimed that his family had lived in New York when it was called New Amsterdam; and, lastly, the Englishman who called himself plain Mr. Smith.

Brüggemann's pale eyes, as bleak as the tops of high mountains in winter, perused, interestedly across their faces. Here, he knew, was Taggart, the power of wealth and considerable power to make or mar the chances of thousands of working folk, power to shape the destinies of nations.

"Well," he said, "we are agreed. Mr. Smith passed. He tried to pretend to be the typical Englishman of the Church, moral sage and custos, and, indeed, he fitted the part with his fair hair and fair moustache and his young mien which had a bearing as commanding as the heart of a lion."

"I think," he said, "that King Michael was—that, say, ER?

He leaned on them all.

Overall broke in. "I cannot negotiate the Krupp loan for more than four per cent."

"And while we wait, all that was talk has effect and nations decide to tread the path of peace," said Brüggemann slowly. "No, Overall. It used to be, and Mr. Smith is right. Assassinate Karl, and half Europe will have up like a flood."

Taggart's quick speech cut across Brüggemann's argument. Van Stegge's mouth closed with itself soundly and the talk went on.

It was talk of war—and death—and war—iddle—and destruction; that odious already enveloping with gold might have been gold plied up of them; that these five men might such themselves still further while across plough to disaster as flame and smoke.

Brüggemann checked the talk. His was the final decision, has the power to say yes or no.

And the short silence that followed his repeated tap on the table top he spoke determinedly.

"It shall be war!"

They sat and looked at each other. It was a tremendous decision, and even they were conscious of it. In silence they stared; and as they stared the silence was broken.

For the first time the word the Voice from the Void.

It broke suddenly on to the room, a crackling and resonant call of sound, coming from some, drifting away to nothingness in fading voices.

Brüggemann murmured that those who take up the sword shall die by the sword. You have time to alter your decision before it is too late.

All save Brüggemann, the unscrupulously were on their feet, their faces blazed; their eyes wide with wonder and apprehension.

"What was that?" gasped Mr. Smith.

Overall was rushing to the door, running back to parading back, pulling free the heavy bolt so that he might race into the passage beyond. At the far end of the passage out of hearing, banging against the wall, were the three despots. Brüggemann had prepared for the parading of this secret conference.

Overall called to them. Nobody had passed. They reply called for no argument. It was true enough.

Something like pain was on them all save Brüggemann. They traversed the walls, floor and the furniture for hidden microphones, and they found nothing. There was nothing to find.

"But," cried Taggart, "who does it now?"

The Voice answered him instantly. "It means that I know, I know. You will understand that, all of you. You talk of death. Believe that death does not talk of you. You talk of assassination. Believe that you yourselves do not exist as assassins. You talk of making war. Believe that not is not made on you."

Brüggemann stood up. He avowed the looks of long and weary toiling above the polished table and the men about it.

"Greatness," he said slowly, "this is for the time being incomparable. It seems that we have a secret adversary. I wish him to be in his effect. Meanwhile, this meeting is adjourned until we see—what we shall see."

He stopped, and with the golden pencil he wrote words of fate on the top sheet of the writing pad before him. Those words were: "I shall have had assassination."

He held the paper up. They read the words and they nodded. Then Brüggemann turned the paper and counted six cracked fingers on his hand—so though he cracked out the life of a king.

And the Voice from the Void was silent.

## ★ A SELLY ASS GETS A JOB

SOME people, when speaking of Jimmy Stegge, always said, "Oh, that silly ass!" and did not consider it unusual to add such men to an already destructive column.

A few—a very few—bad other relatives Jimmy's uncle, Lord Broadwater, also had his opinion of his nephew. That opinion fell short and was between the two extremes mentioned above. Listen to Lord Broadwater's talk, to Jimmy in the library of his home in Granada Square, in which dinner had been announced.

"You know, Jimmy. I'm never really quite sure whether my sister was good or not." Lord Broadwater's sister was Jimmy's mother. "But I am absolutely certain that every time my own eyes are on you I am not pulled up with indecision."

"Eh—no, sir," said Jimmy, eyeing His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with all his respect due to so eminent a gentleman. "Nothing to be pulled up about, I should say. You're the foreigner family." I mean, how are foreign relationships at the moment?"

Lord Broadwater cocked a cold eye at Jimmy, held a cigarette for a moment, then passed.

"Well, have high politics out of this. For God's sake, Jimmy. There are two of us to apologize, in the way."

"Thank you, sir. I told Billy Staton he was wrong. He helped me sort it. He's a frightful wabbit for education. Believe it, sir. Can you beat it? I beg your pardon, sir."

Lord Broadwater nodded. "But, Mr. Smith, also tick this year bank that collapses might over a year a deep debt of gratitude if you compensated to your client, Broad Street Reserve."

Jimmy brightened. "As a matter of fact, no, sir. You see, it was this way. He and I and Potts does more for the Faculty Theatre together. Potts's wife's playing there. Awfully tuppenny, though, though, pretty."

"Quite," assented Lord Broadwater firmly. "Well?"

"And Billy said to me, 'What are you going to do in a hiving, Jimmy?'"

"Really? I was beginning to think you led an isolated hood in the world, Jimmy."

"Jimmy was on. "And I said I didn't know, but that I'd like to do something on the ordinary line, say—say—Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or one of the Big Five at Redding Yard."

"But the post of Police Minister wrote to you during the discussions."

"Jimmy said, 'Eh—I thought our government was enough in the family, sir.' He eyed Lord Broadwater warily and got ready for battle.

By Lord, Jimmy was. Lord of. "I see. And you ultimately decided to become a Secret Service man, eh?" Very interesting does it seem to give you the job, Tommy Isaac in your letter. What is your friend Stubbins to the way?"

"He's an advertising agent, sir."

Lord Broadwater perked up a letter and glanced at it, his head bent so that Jimmy could not see the amusement in his eyes.

"I gathered he was something like that. Nobody else could have composed a letter beginning, 'Dear Uncle, You need not take this opportunity Opportunity only comes in a lifetime and this is yours! He appears to regard you as a dragon, I don't."

The letter returned to the desk top.

"But, top," Jimmy sounded impudent. "I'll have a go. I will really. I mean, I don't pretend to be intellectually brains, less when I was at Cambridge. I had a breakaway in exams, and I get through the middle eighters and I had a Blue for Soccer, and—

"Hm," Lord Broadwater looked him over, a smooth-skinned elegant young man with a pleasant, though slightly vacant, face and mild and engaging blue eyes, fair hair brushed back neatly, and a thin high forehead.

"Look here," and his levity suddenly. "For going to talk to you in confidence—That's to keep this right under your hat."

## The Mystery of the Phantom Ship

James. I myself regard the whole affair as a joke, but there may be something in it. Have you heard of the *Phantom Ship*?"

"Do you mean the Flying Dutchman?"

"No. The *Phantom Ship*. The *Phantom Ship* is even sometimes in the *Phantom Embassy*, on the *Scenes* side. I can only direct you to a newspaper man, a very old man of somewhat evil repute, called the Fighting Friar. Where my information comes from I am not prepared to divulge. The Fighting Friar happens to be on the *Kent* side of the *embassy*, roundly enough, though the *Phantom Ship* has been seen on the *Canary* side. So—get along and see what you can discover about it."

He added directions for finding the Fighting Friar, and then said: "And, by the way, be careful. In sight—or might not—be dangerous."

"Jimmy, I give you my word. You never that?"

"And as Lord Broadwater would?"

"Is there nothing else you can tell me?"

"Nothing at all."

"But you know a lot more!" Jimmy said, had at him. "It's smothering me. I tell you!"

"You are not supposed to indulge in futile theorizing," said Lord Broadwater.

"You'll go, sir?" All right, James. And so

he considered a way to have pardoned for Jimmy's question. Which showed that he did not know his James at all.

### ★ JIMMY SOCKS A SPY

JIMMY booked to Herne Bay, and the man who had followed him off the way from Grosvenor Square, Old Bailey, stood behind him at the telephonebooth and listened to his demand for a ticket.

Jimmy had a lot of vague ideas floating about in his mindless brain. He had first no idea that Lord Broadwater was seeking to regard that situation on which he now proceeded as a joke, as something which was unimportant; but yes, which might prove as important, as he which might prove as important, as the *hundredth* class, and was, therefore, not to be entirely neglected.

Also, he had an idea that if it did, by that *hundredth* chance, prove to be important, it would be very surprising indeed Jimmy, so to speak, girded up his loins and got ready for combat.

He travelled first class, mainly because it never occurred to him to travel any other way, and so the man who had followed him, on getting into the compartment with him, found nobody else present. The train pulled

into one episode and, instead, and then a little bewildered and quite uncertain of himself.

They reached Herne Bay under darkness, and took a taxi to the best hotel in the place. Jimmy had a very bland view regarding these expensy sheets.

Jimmy knew that the Fighting Friar lay out somewhere near the Headwaters. It was late winter, and that fat streak of road about the two towns, with their tiny clusters of cottages at their best, would be desolate, wind-swept, and desolate. Nevertheless, Jimmy resolved to go straight away to the man and see what he could find.

His taxi dashed in follow lines, and when Jimmy, stepping down from his bedroom, left the hotel, the man went after him. The following was over. He trudged after Jimmy up the cliff path and towards Beltring. It was a very long walk over grass, but Jimmy stuck to it. The man had him momentarily at a dark spot.

A policeman found the man about a quarter of an hour later. He was lying on a bench and his downstairs by the side of an unmade road, and he had not the faintest idea as to what had happened to him save that something had arisen from the darkness with something, from on the *jaw*. He thought with a fair of room, but he was not certain.



"Look! Look! The *Phantom Ship*! A terrified scream went out across the dark water,

out and west, stretching along the southern coast of Kent, toward the *Scenes*.

Jimmy's fellow tramp was a lousy sort of chap with big shoulders and bony-like hands. He decided to talk to Jimmy.

"Going to *Thief's*?" he asked.

"Hans Bay," said Jimmy. "Fighting place. Come on. Come on. And I'm very far down. Been working at a building place. Keeping the old house together and all that."

The man stood at blue and wondered if he had made a mistake. "Hans," he said, "is a bad?"

"I'm going there myself," he confessed, lamely.

"Really?" Now tapping. "We can go together. I'm very fond of company. Don't get on without it, in fact. Where are you staying?"

"Now come, now come, after a moment of hesitation. "I don't know."

"Neither do I," said Jimmy lamely. "We'll find a place together."

And then he started on after the fashion of *hans-sets*, and the large man followed in

meanwhile, Jimmy, gently rousing slightly groggy lambs, was limping on towards the Fighting Friar. Lord Broadwater would have received a whole lot of his opinions could he have seen him.

As Jimmy went on, his mind wandered over all kinds of subjects, and among them, for some reason or other, was something he had observed in the newspaper he had bought in London before starting his *just now*.

It was that King Michael the Fourth of Rumania, the *inept*, *Admiral* *ambush* *country*, was arriving in London that night.

Michael was a tall, rather long, and not a make believe *admiral*. Ships and the sea were a passion with him, and whenever possible he travelled in his own yacht, a *whale* of about a couple of hundred tons built on the lines of *Cliffs* *Rock*, *pass* than the usual auxiliary engine had been added.

It was in this ship, the *Eagle*, that he was to cross to *London*, embarking in the *Paul* *with whom* *shipping*, the *shipping* he loved.

Jimmy dismissed King Michael from his

## The Voice speaks across the Waters

thoughts and tangled garlands at last came in the Fighting Frigates.

It was a very old man, hair knifed in tufts, bag-eyed, and drooder looking, with bulging whiskers fitted with tortoiseshell and a high, tinkled gold. A very picturesque place with its low windows glowing like a cell over through the sailor curtain.

It should right suddenly, and levitate at a short, sharp wince into the earth. James wondered what kind of况味 and how many it could have told.

He approached it carefully. The weird was crossing slightly across the estuary, and all the date were dark, listlessly under the night's blossom, silent over for the mystery and fury of wild things.

Jimmy looked about him. Near by a short and slender pole snarled a length of wire away from the road. He snatched up this pole, produced a powerful knot of the kind the Army makes, and then slid down again. He was gone in time.

Five minutes later, he with the poleman and picked up in Bellings, and who had been released from the station, tried to get through to the Fighting Frigates and was told that the connection was broken. He walked out to hire a car.

Jimmy, mounting, crept to the edge of the drifts, and there he saw something which at once he knew. Lying in the shelter of the tall reeds was a bird that at once made his heart quiver and crossed his memory.

He was about thirty feet long, his neck decked from nose to stern, with a steel and glass wheel-boats, a single and naked points of a boat, wet grey in colour, rolling aimlessly at the morning at the Bush Head and the estuary water meeting here the drifts.

There was something mounted on his forward deck that Jimmy did not immediately recognize as a leg and egg something like a wide cylinder in which he had to stare and stare again below, with a little stiff head, at his hands. He realized it was a torpedo tube. What he asked himself was, was it a torpedo tube doing about a ship of the navy? It was a man-eater built for speed, and carrying a deadly weapon of war.

He took back in the line. He was quiet and slow and he moved with the ease of a practiced swimmer. He reached the centered window. The curtain had not been properly drawn and he was able to see into the room.

Four men were gathered there. One of them was a short, fat fellow with a nose-bleeding red face and tiny, dancing blue eyes.

He was a peddler and had a peaked sailor's cap tucked on the back of his head. Two of his companions were rough like troopers and blue jerseys with a song in red across their chests. "H.Y. Velocity," Jimmy guessed that the big notes had won the Velocity. The fourth man was a lean, keen person clad in a belted black garment. A soft cloth hat lay on the table of his side.

Suddenly something hurtled down from the ceiling and hit the fat man in the face. It was a rubber ball.

He leaped out of his chair yelling. "I'll suck that monkey with all I have, see if I don't! Ha! You, grinning scabious, come over here!"

There was a quick screeching screech. A small monkey whizzed round the picture and took a flying leap, and landed at the red-faced man's bald head. Then, with another flying leap, he was up on the peddler and again.

The uncoordinated man started with laughter and said: "Adams took joyful thought, Sam."

"I'll Adams has of I by no shapock him," growled the fat man, and threw his cap at the monkey. The monkey caught it and just as backwards, Jimmy guessed he had hit that monkey. He was destined to see a great deal of him.

The fat man was snarled down and shrills were called for. The baulder brought them

in and observed. "It waits about the entrance to home, Sam."

Warders were looked at. The shanty was finally awakened, and Adams was brought from his place by a pair of rags.

### ★ TORPEDO FOR A KING

JIMMY had a task on his shoulders. He scuttled down to the galleys and clapped down the big motor-boat. His forward hatch was open, and he dropped into a narrow space, with both his two men on either side of it. It was dark and it crashed and smelt. He crawled there, and as he groped for a suitable resting place he heard barking something smooth and hard and cold.

He felt next it. It was like feeling a great wind shark. The dog slept and went very cold. He knew he was groping across a torpedo; that under his hands he caught high explosive to stuff the boat and himself and cold.

He heard the thud of hoisted deck above, the clatter of the monkey. Sam's voice reached him.

"Cost all astern. Know that howfar, Tom?"

Men were applying. There was a quick alarm, the ship half began to think greatly. Four hundred horse-power was whirling from sleep.

"Cost off ahead!" said Sam.

The ship increased. The boat creased to roll shrilly. The high talk of voice sounded past Jimmy's hiding place. The boat had duly stopped. Sam's voice.

Sam was heading straight away towards the white horizon high of the Gender Light. The tide was high, and her arm'd thoughts reached her in an early arrival the Spanish Fleet without any thought whatsoever. For bigger ships than she could make the Dreadnought Passage as safety under these conditions.

Sam, having got her outside, cautiously landed the shore over to one of his men, for Jimmy heard him stamping on the deck and talking to the man in the rainbow.

"He ain't got no another boat, Captain, and not even then, perhaps, for the wind ain't been right for him and I'd have to tack to the Portland after leaving Dover. Of course, he need his arm'd. But I understand he never will unless he can't help it. But mark them say. And like a king too! If I was a king, I'd buy the Aquarius and live in it. None of your windjambers for us!"

Jimmy's heart missed a beat. A long . . . and then grim torpedo at his side . . . the right angle-dash . . . and his memories of the announcement, in his newspaper of the arrival of Michael of Karnak?

But it was ridiculous. Here, if it were true, was man and baulder mauls planned as the high seas. This shea craft that had at half speed through the sleepy waste of the estuary beyond the rope was a teller-if-a-new-mat.

The other men were watching Sam. "Is the boat fitted in that torpedo?"

"No. We're going to fit it now. It's down there. We didn't think it was fit if we were ready. After all, you never know. It'd drift without its head, and we wasn't taking chances for days on top of a powder magazine, believe me."

I suppose . . . By the way, is that fellow of yours G.R. fit the job? I don't understand torpedoes a bit myself. Do you?"

"No. But Tom does. He was a torpedo engineer in the Navy before they piffed his hat and his thinking, and hell, not that baulder mauls as ours we're about this stuff. Work better have him fit the boat." He recited: "Jesus! Jesus! Tom!"

He gave the men the necessary orders, something dropped down beside Jimmy and began to shake and fumble about. It was Adams, the monkey.

Through the captain's charting board Sam said, " . . . and he's coming through the Palace's Channel. He's got to the side of that. He's beat up as far as the Tongue light, and then two and have the wind on his starboard quarter and he right in. You can't tell me."

Sam was groping over the bank, and Jimmy crawled in the dark and got ready for anything. And as Tongue beat a hole the Year from the Void sounded across the water.

"If you wish to live tell me where about stop and make port!"

It sounded above the whirling of the wind and the noise of the fire-torpedoes. It drummed the thrum of the great anguish, the pulsing song of the ship's progress. It came out of the night's dark heart, as though a phantom giant beats down the water and shaped and spoke to those on the "Tribute."

Sam gasped. "Who said that?"

"To the Voice. About ship, if you value your life."

Tom at the battlement, jolted. "It's a ghost. That's what it is. A ghost."

"Ghost, be hanged!" roared Sam. "I don't believe an' it. You get down and fit that torpedo head, and make it ready. Mine's a leg, you frightened baulder."

Something laughed. Never did human being listen to such laughter—over—crossing and up, hideous laughter, the snarl of a demon.

The man in the ironcoat used "Baunder" in misery. "Jesus . . ."

Sam shouted desperately. "Are you going to hang over that battlement all night, Tom? Get down, I tell you or I'll knock you down."

The laughter went on. Tom dropped his cut into the darkness of the foremast cabin, and groped with trembling hand for the light switch, while the grim laughter sailed across the dark water.

And Jimmy, straightening himself, along a vacant right clear of Tom's gun, just laid an arm above the point of his fist. It was a bone-crushing punch, and Tom, without any sound at all, dropped helplessly across the bleated body of the great torpedo.

The laughter ceased. The compasses silence the ship drew on.

It seemed that she was mortally too fully, as though she herself had sensed that laughter, had appreciated that warning, and feared . . . and feared . . .

Sam said in a changed tone: "Tom. That was a funny do. What would you make of it?"

"Heaven knows."

The rump of the uncoordinated man was short. Silence followed it. Nobody wanted to speak. The ship drew on.

Painfully either of them thought of looking down the forward hatch.

The Voice boomed again. "You have not heeded my warning. Your blood is an iron crossroads."

"Here," said the uncoordinated one. "This is too much, skipper. This is something by you all understanding. I'm not being a."

Sam suddenly hastened. Even his simple heart was tripping mortally. A missile was being made from the waters.

"I'll see how Tom's getting on," he said. He began to move. Jimmy got ready for anything that might be coming to him. Sam was near the lip of the hatch when the uncoordinated trudged over snarled through the darkness, casting his grisly apathesis from an opened window of the wheelhouse.

"The Phantom Ship? Look! Look! The Phantom Ship! It's true! It's the Phantom Ship!"

The "Tribute's" helm went hard over and she spun like a top as she heeled to starboard, till deep in the lifting cream-handled blackness.

What is like uncoordinated Undecked the Void? What is the Phantom Ship, and on what strange current does it sail? The "Tribute" is a mystery yet unanswerable. The uncoordinated uncoordinated crew service their iron and wooden adventure, their next week's gripping instalment.



# The SOUNDLESS HOUR

Men spoke, but no sounds came! An explosion shattered a house, but it was not heard. Terror stalked in the silence of the Soundless Hour.

## ★ MURDER BELOW

**L**UXING flat on the bare boards of the room, two men listened intently for sounds of activity below.

"A engine here, all right," said one. "We haven't heard the slightest sound below. I wonder if it's been successful?"

"We'll hear soon enough," answered the other. "I wouldn't mind battering the old tower down just now." *Laughter.*

The two men peered down their glass to the boards and from the room below they heard a slow, monotonous *rumble*.

"Is that the *Tribune*?" They thought to Mr. Manganin.

The listening men were men with experience. They heard the noise before opening the "phone again.

"That's you, Joe?" The voice was charged with suppressed excitement. "I supposed that you should be the first to hear of my new discovery. I have just passed through a stupendous demonstration. If you'll come down right away I'll give you particulars. I can't explain what it is on the telephone. What's that? You want me to hold on for a minute. Very well."

The listening men looked at each other.

"Come on—will you believe old me of this? If the *Tribune* gets this down, it gives us a chance. It's now or never."

The two men left their office and descended the stairs till they stood outside the door of the room in which the man was telephoning.

"What is that?" They heard a voice.

"You're hearing sound at once? Good. My directory." Well, perhaps I say as well tell you now what it is. . . . I will demonstrate to you so that you can repeat that my discovery was sound. . . . Well, what I have discovered

At that instant the two men from the office above, who were on their boards, sprang into the room. The old, white-haired scientist was now in alarm.

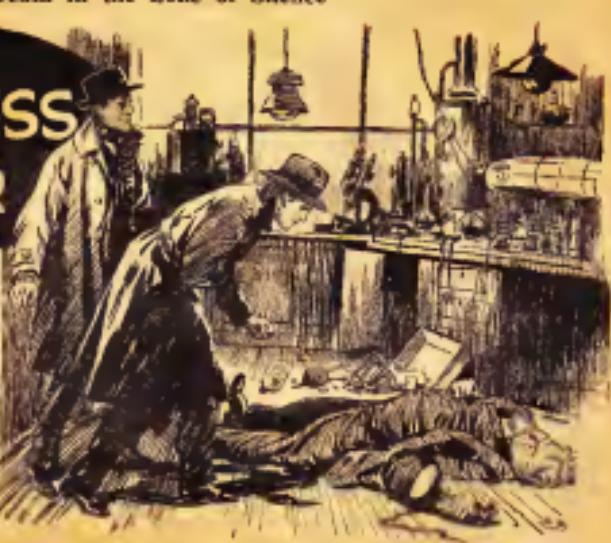
The man presented an amazing picture but the listeners were rapidly familiar with it. The long, sprawling body of the glass robot connected with a long, tapered lego containing blood with a pressure gauge and the spiraled pipe leading from the spinal column as nostrils.

Indeed, they seemed to know what all the appearance was for. For one of them stepped softly to a small, simple-to-construct radio and pulled a few red knobs.

The robot blotted out the telephone in silence.

"Help!—Help!—Help!" Staid and quiet, I was being attacked. . . . Help!—Help!—

With as all that Belighted Beldam had to call into the "phone. For the gas was now free on the room, and one of the te-



The two newspaper men went forward in horrified alarm. The scientist was lying at the foot of the bench, the "phone still clasped in his hands.

lapping croak, a grin on his hatched face, dropped the name of his automatic and deliberately said: "The old cat sharpened the fine old grasper the phone is an old hunk."

Joe Manganin and Ted Whynans, reporter on the London newspaper, the *Tribune*, dashed from the pressroom office into the waiting car and started right to Hallowe Green.

They got up the steps of the old brick house, saw it out into office, and crossed into the room at the entrance.

"What's happened?" grappled out Joe Manganin. "Are the police here?" Is it right?"

"Easy like," greeted the man. "What's you think about?"

"Why, Professor Hallowe! I am failing to get to the phone when he called for help—until he was attacked—and then nothing more was heard."

"Well, it's a hard nut," argued the man. "I would better go on."

They went up to the third floor, and Manganin and Whynans dashed into the room, the door of which had been left wide open. A weak, sickly smell pervaded the atmosphere.

All three fell back in alarm. Stretched out as the first of the dust of the bench on which his complicated apparatus was mounted lay the body of disgruntled Hallowe.

"Stunned to silence, the three men stared at one another.

Then their eyes moved toward the room and finally settled on the complicated gauging apparatus on the bench—the boiler, meter, pressure gauge, speeded pipe, thermal meter and gauge.

A thin wisp of vapor moved from the gauging end of the spinal pipe.

Young Whynans's eyes lit with startled wildness and disbelief again. He suddenly burst into laughter, and with a frantic gesture toward the man, uttered a startled speech a mixture of words. The other two young men, however, saw Joe Manganin's face turn white with alarm. But suddenly an sound issued from his lips.

The paroxysm, started out of his with tormented and ran from the room; but his footfalls made no noise.

His lips were opened in a shout of wild alarm as he sat, but no sound came.

His footfalls were dead silent as the paroxysm ended. But as he descended as the footfalls began to sound, at first doleful, then sharp, and hoarse.

Finally he tripped and fell, shattering glass in his flight of stairs. The timbrel-pounding had sounded like a whisper at his grounded. Then it grew to volume till at the moment when he was battering glass all.

"Help!—Help!—Help!—The murder!—The—murder!—Everyone—everybody—dead—dead—dead!—Murder!—Murder!"

## ★ NEW METHODS IN CRIME

**W**ITHIN thirty seconds people were crowding up the stairs, those behind passing and those stood falling back in terror; apparently, they were struck dead and dumb.

For an hour this state of chaos existed. Then the silence ceased, and men spoke in voices whispering to each other. Footfalls and voices could be heard once more.

The police investigation was confirming while Joe Manganin and Ted Whynans were frantically writing up their story for the evening edition of the *Tribune*.

Before many hours had passed, Scotland Yard, and the *Tribune* staff had a staff of scientists working in the maddest scientist's laboratory. But, try as they would, they could not make sense out of his apparatus. Paper evidently examined failed to give a clue.

But Manganin and Whynans, friends of the late scientist, had purchased most of his papers, and Manganin was writing.

Back in their office, Manganin discussed the case with Whynans.

The pair thought that that old National Acrobat in Hallowe's laboratory was genius in their inventiveness. Ted, he said. But that page we turned up showed signs of having been referred to pretty often. You'll remember the heading: "Soundless Death in Gas." "Warning to Whynans!"

"I copied the whole thing in shorthand,

*(Please turn to page 20)*



